

THE
HISTORY
OF
SIR GEOFFRY RESTLESS,
AND
HIS BROTHER CHARLES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE TRIFLER.

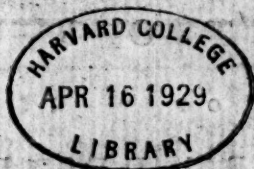
IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. I.

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P R E F A C E.

AS this publication is announced to be written by the author of the Trifler, it may be necessary to give some account of that work.

The Trifler consisted of four volumes; two of which were published in 1775, and the other two in 1777; and would, from the encouragement it met with, have been followed up by more; had not the author's time been employed totally in other affairs of much greater moment so long afterwards, that it was judged too late to resume the subject, on his becoming an idle man again.

In

In that performance the author held up to ridicule *certain* characters who, by their turbulent spirit of innovation ever since, have not forfeited their claim to the notice taken of them in these volumes; as objects more fit for sport, than any serious attention to their abuse.

They were so exceedingly angry at the liberties the author took with them in the *Trifler*, that although they acknowledged the merit of the work in every other respect, he was called a viper, a defamer, who, instigated by malice, employed those twin ruffians, cruelty and cowardice, to assassinate in the dark—Who? — Two sacred persons, who, not only by every sly, artful method possible, but in the face of the sun,
pub-

P R E F A C E

publickly, and with the most daring insolence, and open, and avowed declarations in their writings, have for these many years past, most sedulously, and with the most unremitting ardour, endeavoured to SUBVERT OUR BLESSED CONSTITUTION !!!

But that the reader may not conceive that he is going to be led through a tedious track of beaten ground, I will beg leave to inform him, that the above circumstance, though a strong feature, bears a very small proportion in the history of Sir Geoffry Restless; which turns upon a much larger scale of matter and events.

In order to blunt the edge of the rage of these redoubted heroes against the poor Trifler, I will with
all

all due submission, and without claiming to myself the least importance, or being guilty of the smallest degree of vanity, give the underneath opinion of my work (the Trifler) in which the reader will find, I was not altogether deemed the horrid d—l, as set forth in the above-mentioned account of me.

The Critical Review for July 1777, in speaking of the Trifler, has the following words:

“ He displays an uniformly generous heart, free from prejudices, and endowed with a great fund of sensibility. The beauties of nature afford him real pleasure, and always diffuse in his breast a happy serenity; whilst the love of mankind

P R E F A C E. vii.

kind gives life and vigour to all his pursuits, and endears his maxims to the virtuous reader.

“ Among the numerous volumes of amusement which fill our Monthly Catalogues, we seldom meet with any which have so much merit as the Trifler.”

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THE

TO YACHTSMEN
THE
HISTORY
OF
SIR GEOFFRY RESTLESS.

CHAP. I.

CHARACTER OF SIR GEOFFRY.

SIR GEOFFRY was in possession of a good estate in the county of Warwick until the year 1790, when he departed this life, in consequence of a wrongheaded notion which he always entertained, and continually puzzled his brains about, that things very well in themselves, might be mended; notwithstanding the surest principles laid down by the wisest philosophers, amount to the plainest fact in the world,—that there is
A nothing

nothing *perfect* under the sun, and that we ought to be content with our lot until we are advanced through a regular progression, into the glorious realms where *infinite* perfection will be found.

From the preceding concise statement of the character of Sir Geoffry it is unnecessary to add any thing farther in this introduction to his story; as the reader will perceive that there is already a large field for employment, in a description of the actions of a man whose unsettled temper, as above inferred, hurried him to the grave before the time he would have been consigned to the regions of eternity, had he been of a more placid disposition.

I will, therefore, without farther apology or preface, respecting Sir Geoffry, only say that his oddities, whims, capricious violences, follies and vices, with their consequences, during the latter part of his life, to which I was often an eye witness, and always so near to the scene of his actions,
that

that the report of them amounted to the same thing, appeared to me of such a striking nature as to furnish me with materials* for a couple of volumes upon the subject, under the humble hope that they will contain a competent degree of entertainment, to warrant my temerity in the offer of them to the perusal of the public.

A 2

CHAP.

* Most of the following pages were composed during the last half year of his life.

THE HISTORY OF

C H A P. II.

CHARACTER OF CHARLES.

CHARLES, on the contrary, was of such a serene disposition, that his late father, who had been of the same restless spirit of his eldest son Geoffry, conceiving that he must not be his own child, but begotten by another, his mother bearing him after a cohabitation with her husband of several years since the birth of Sir Geoffry, left him nothing in the world at his death, but a mortifying claim upon a capricious brother for a mere support as a gentleman in his house. They had equally received a good education, which though, as will be seen, Sir Geoffry made a bad use of it, yet Charles converted it to the best of purposes, in his necessitous and sorrowful situation.

Upon

Upon the death of his father (for his mother died long before the old knight, in consequence of his ill treatment of her, on the above-cited grounds of his jealousies and surmises, that Charles was not the issue of his own loins) he endeavoured to persuade Sir Geoffry, but without effect, to advance him a few hundreds, to put him in a way of the study of some respectable profession, as a younger brother of an ancient family, by which he might have some hopes of raising himself to distinction, and become an honour instead of a disgrace to his progenitors.

Charles was twenty years of age, before the death of his father compelled him to apply to his brother, who had received ALL, to give him a part, just sufficient to enable him to struggle with the world for himself. But notwithstanding the reasonableness of his request, and his brother a batchelor, of thirty-five years standing, with a clear overflowing estate, without any incumbrances upon it whatever; he

was so far from entering into Charles's proposal that he swore (against all the ties of consanguinity which should have urged him to have assisted, and put into some reputable line, a deserving young man, possessed of the whole fund of the "milk of human kind") that there was no alternative for him to pursue, but that of either living with him as a faithful discharger of the offices he should put him to in his own house, or to turn out of it a penniless starved pauper and a beggar.

Though Charles did not want courage, yet he was not of the enterprising spirit of Orlando in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*; nor had he a faithful old Adam to give him the savings, which, from his long services in the family, he had earned, and to offer him his feeble personal aid in seeking their fortunes together in some other situation: he, therefore, forbore seizing Sir Geoffry by the throat, as Orlando had done his brother Oliver upon a similar base affront, and
cruel

SIR GEOFFRY RESTLESS. 7

cruel usage; but contented himself in the hope of some fortunate event, with a patient resignation to his present sufferings, which however great, he did not know how to extricate himself from, without encountering much greater.

In consequence of his hard lot, and his quiet disposition, Charles made no answer to the above abusive language of Sir Geoffry, but retired from his presence to give vent to his sorrows, and to ease his afflicted heart in a solitary walk to a neighbouring farm.

8 THE HISTORY OF

C H A P III.

THE BEAUTIFUL NANNETTE.

THIS pretty girl was the only daughter of a gentleman of considerable property formerly, who had given her a very polite education, but afterwards meeting with misfortunes, he had been reduced to the necessity of taking a farm now under Sir Geoffry for his and her support.

Having no other difficulties upon his hands, to wage the war of fighting against inevitable disaster, than the one of making use of the remains of his broken estates for the purpose of getting a comfortable livelihood in the cultivation of land, which he was always, in his prosperous days, exceedingly fond of; he soon advanced himself into a way of recovering his affairs, so far at least, as to get on decently in the world; and to enjoy the
middle

middle situation of life, with a great degree of comfort and satisfaction.

From his taste in disposing of his farm yard, dunghills, cowhouses, and every other offensive object, which generally, instead of being thrown out of sight, are presented to your eye and nostrils immediately upon your entrance of the premises to proceed to the house; the front of his habitation was perfectly clear of every of these nuisances: and appeared the substantial residence of a respectable gentleman farmer; while the above-mentioned offices were much more commodiously situated behind it; and to which you had no occasion to go, unless you had the curiosity to find out the place where they lay: the adjoining large and numerous ricks of hay and corn, denoting, palpably, the occupier to be in a considerable line of husbandry.

He had an elegant area of lawn before his door, with a good garden annexed to

it, and an orchard of fruit-trees, in progression to a grove intermixed with shrubs of various kinds, that ran down by the side of a purling stream in the loveliest arrangement conceivable; until it was lost among the scattered brakes, and winding paths that led you through the distant low meadows, or the rising tillage, or field pasture, as your inclinations or business might prompt you: and from whence you behold his fine herd of cows feeding upon the enamelled plains, with the lusty bull breathing defiance to any encroachment upon the privileges of his seraglio; his flocks of sheep nibbling the short grass from the smooth surface of the dry uplands, and the rich and promising fields for hay and corn, that display themselves in the intervening scenery, on the cheerful and re-animating first of May, the time of the year when the above sketch was taken of his farm.

His house in the inside was composed of a comfortable set of rooms for the purposes

poses both of his business and his pleasure. His servants kitchen was large, comfortable and convenient. His dairy, sweet, cool, and clean. His hall, or common room for the enjoyment of his friends over the pipe and the tankard, was cheerful and capacious. His dining-room excellent. But above all, his parlour for the accommodation of his beloved Nannette, and her female visitors, was elegant in the extreme, and furnished to a degree of the most refined taste that a fond father could expend to please and indulge the only remains of his family, who had been reared in the expectation of the best of fortunes; and who now, on the reverse side of the question was the most dutiful, kind, and satisfied creature in the world, and exerted all her talents to soothe the sorrows that would sometimes obtrude themselves upon a parent who had seen better days, in spite of all his efforts and his philosophy, to prevent their recurring to his memory.

This charming girl, though no more than eighteen years of age, was possessed of such quick, penetrating and lively parts, that almost intuitively she saw into the nature of the whole concerns of the family; and managed it, as the female head of it, without doing any drudgery herself, in a manner of prudence and circumspection equal to the first of matrons and of housewives.

She was the delight of all the servants, who flew at her beck to execute her commands, because they always found them to be just, reasonable and necessary: and the effects of a rare, but consummate knowledge, in so young a person.

From the extreme sprightliness of her temper, the elegance and celerity of her actions, the small but exact proportioned size of her person, though she had been christened by the name of Anna her father in his fond dotage of her, could never bear the thought of calling her by an
appel-

appellation so common among the lusty and heavy female domestics of a farmhouse ; he, therefore, substituted, in the room of it, the one of Nannette, which I have given her at the head of this chapter merely in conformity to his conceit ; which whether right or wrong, weighty or trifling, it is of no consequence to myself, or to the reader.

CHAP.

INTERVIEW OF CHARLES AND NANNETTE.

IT was to this farm which was not two miles from Sir Geoffry's seat, that the unhappy and disappointed Charles repaired, immediately after the abrupt, fordid, and cruel treatment which he had met with from his violent and unnatural brother.

He had always a welcome reception here, during the life of his father, and a ready attention paid to his complaints against the pointed preference given to Geoffry by the old man, and his scornful behaviour to him to the end of his days. But as neither Nannette nor her father could possibly conceive that the old knight upon his death, which happened about a fortnight before Charles's present visit to them, would leave him nothing
but

but the support from his brother, as above-mentioned, it was the more distressing to the mind of Charles, to trouble them with a relation of such an addition to his grievances, that would, in all likelihood, deprive him of the only acquaintance he had, whom he could call upon, with any hopes of receiving comfort and consolation, under his now most dreadful calamity.

Charles had attended his father's funeral with the respect of a most dutiful son; had never in the above-mentioned interim been officious to learn the state of his will, but patiently waited his brother's leisure, until Sir Geoffry, eight or nine days after the interment, had it read to him in the presence of the witnesses.

He discovered no signs of anger upon this trying occasion; but retired from the company without speaking a word, resting himself satisfied in the hope, that his brother would give him something, at least

least, out of his abundance, for his own use, in some way or other, that might ultimately terminate to his advantage.

Pondering these things in his mind, he did not intrude himself upon his brother's busy settling of accounts and looking over the papers and writings which put him into the possession of such large property, until the afternoon of the day he met with his disappointment, and consequently retired to the farm.

Learning on that day from the servants, that Sir Geoffry was drinking his bottle of port, and in great good humour, regaling himself over the piles of parchment, which lay in heaps on a table before him, and which he had perused entirely to his satisfaction; Charles ventured to take what he thought this favourable opportunity, when Sir Geoffry's heart seemed to be mellowed to his purposes, of entering his room, in the most civil and inoffensive way; but instead

stead of meeting with a kind reception, Sir Geoffry treated him as a thief, by snatching up his writings, throwing them into a trunk, and asking him, what the devil he meant by stealing upon his privacy, and prying into his affairs. The consequence was, that Charles, with the meekness of a lamb, just intimated to Sir Geoffry, the proposal which has already been related, and received Sir Geoffry's rude answer to it as before specified.

The news of the deceased knight's will had not reached Nannette, her father, nor any of the country people before the time of Charles's disconsolate walk to the farm, upon the above shocking treatment of him by his brother: so that he was the first messenger of his own hard case to that family.

On his entrance into the hall, he saw nobody but a few scattered servants running about their business, without regarding him; and who, from his own distressed
furnishes

surmises, he thought had been by some means or other apprized of the will, and therefore considered him as a poor devil not worthy their notice.

He stood for a considerable time in the hall, in the most perplexed state of mind that the sad heart of a forlorn and despised man could suggest. The most poignant feelings, upon this occasion, took place of his easy temper, and he found himself as miserable as a wretch plunged from the summit of felicity into the regions of horror and dismay.

Overwhelmed in confusion, he was going to retire he knew not whither, when on his passing an entry that led towards Nannette's parlour, he thought he heard the music of her piano forte, and her own soft breathing tones accompanying it.

The silence that reigned throughout the premises, the tender soothing melancholy

choly of the tones, which he hardly knew whether he heard or not, impelled him to draw nearer to the place from whence they issued, and to seat himself upon an arm chair at the door.

Here he was perfectly convinced of the reality, and that it was not an illusion of the imagination. He felt the kind of desperate consolation which the wretched sometimes do, upon the extremest verge of their being consigned to poverty and neglect, that by remaining where he was, he should have the opportunity of being discarded and sent back to his relentless brother by the voice and command of the beautiful Nannette, instead of his being kicked out of the house by the servants.

He did not wait long before the decision of his fate, respecting the behaviour to him of Nannette, happened.

This

This sprightly nymph had been amusing herself at her instrument for a considerable time, in consequence of her father and most of the servants being employed about the affairs without doors, which was not in her province to look after, and, therefore, she had at this time nothing else to do; not having any material business to transact, and no company with her.

On her finishing a pathetic performance of music, accompanied by her voice, which had nearly deprived poor Charles of his senses, in his present desponding state of mind, she came out of the parlour, to see if her father and his people were returning from the fields; but being intercepted in her passage by the sight of Charles sitting in the most melancholy posture, at her door, she exclaimed, "Hey, Charles! what is the matter? why do you sit in that horrid position? how comes it, when you must have heard me playing upon my instrument, that you did
" not

not join me in an entertainment which you always was so fond of? Come into the parlour," she continued, "I have not heard what the old knight has left you; I dare say it is very considerable, and will make you and your friends exceedingly happy."

Here Charles fetched such a deep sigh, and was so extremely agitated, that Nannette, conceiving he must be seized with a fit of some sort or other, took fast hold of his hand, pulled him into the parlour, put him in a chair, and was going to rub his temples with hartshorn, when he prevented her by faintly crying, "I am not bodily ill Nannette; my disease is in the mind, and incurable by any applications that you can administer to my relief."

"What in the name of wonder ails you then?" said Nannette; "Answer me directly, I am all impatience."

I am

" I am a beggar," he said, " my father has not left me a shilling, separately. Nay, worse than a beggar, for he has consigned me to the mortifying dependence, for my support as a gentleman, to an unnatural brother; who, upon my humbly asking the favour of him, not two hours ago, to give me a small share out of his abundant riches to struggle with the world for myself, and to be of no farther incumbrance to him; he has treated me as a thief that meant to rob him of his property; and has dismissed me from his presence with the most abusive language: intimating that I must be content to live with him as a slave to his concerns, or to seek my fortune in another way, without a farthing in my pocket to begin with."

This sudden surprize and shock upon the sensibility of Nannette, depriving her of her powers to say any thing immediately to Charles, upon such an unparalleled baseness

baseness of treatment, which he had so unmeritedly met with from his father and his brother, he mistook (as all unfortunate people do) for a wish in her to get rid of such a contemptible creature, as he thought himself, in the best manner she could, without a palpable affront offered him in her discarding so mean an object from her acquaintance; and upon her retiring from him to a chair, and covering her lovely face with her handkerchief, to smother her tears and grief for his distressed situation, lest by his observing of her compassion for him, he should be plunged still deeper into the pains, which already seemed to her to be insupportable; he suddenly rose, and rushed out of the parlour, in order to spare the woe-stricken girl the unkind trouble and embarrassment of expressing that neglect of him, which she had already, he conceived, sufficiently discovered in her actions.

Frightened

Frightened almost out of her senses at his hasty departure, Nannette flew after him, seized him a second time by the arm, and in spite of his efforts to release himself from her grasp, and to plunge himself into the regions of despair, she hurried him back into the parlour, placed him in his chair, and, falling upon her own, she gave a full vent to her sorrows and concern for him, in a flood of streaming tears, that overwhelmed her beauteous cheeks, as she wept aloud in all the agony of the most heart-felt grief and astonishment.

Such a manifest proof of her concern for the deplorable case of poor Charles, instantaneously roused him from his state of despair, and he exerted all his assiduity to mitigate the woe of Nannette and to appease her violent emotions on his account.

He declared to her, as soon as he could make her hear him, that the proof
which

which she had given him of the extreme goodness of her own heart, in her so generously feeling for the sorrows and disappointments of another, would have such an effect upon his future conduct, as to enable him to bear up against the mortifying afflictions that must inevitably fall upon him, in his wretched life with his vile brother; and that if she would but deign to comfort him with her smiles and approbation, he would never complain, but always think himself the happiest man upon earth.

“Complain!” cried Nannette, as her rage against Sir Geoffry took place of her sorrow for Charles;—“Complain!” she cried, while her avenging blood mustered from her heart, and flew into her disordered countenance in a suffusion as red as the flaming orb of day, when the coming tempests threaten a dissolution of nature. “Complain!” she cried, starting from her chair and stalking about the

B

room,

room, like a heroine of the first magnitude, determined to wrest the shackles from the hands of an unfeeling tyrant that would force her to comply with his lawless caresses, or to die in the attempt. "No, Charles," she at last exclaimed, "if you can possibly be so mean spirited as to suffer yourself, after the cruel testament of the base old knight, in which he has made no other provision for you, except a wretched dependence upon your brother; and from which testament, if I have understood you right, your brother is obliged to support you as a gentleman, so long as you think fit to remain in his house:—If Charles, as I have said before, under such circumstances as these, you can continue, to lose yourself, in a quiet sufferance of every indignity that this haughty, violent, and sordid brother of your's, will certainly attempt to offer you,—never come here any more—I will not see such a dastard.—These wicked, arrogant fellows, are all, like Sir Geoffry, cowards at the bottom. He cannot turn
you

you out of his house; you have a positive claim to reside in it, and to eat his viands, and drink his wines. He wishes, I can see from his first flagrant affront, to get rid of you by your own imprudence, in your suffering his impertinence to throw you out of the line of his protection; and by casting yourself, in consequence of his insolence, into the wide world, without a penny to bless yourself withal, or any business you have learned, by which you might gain a pitiful livelihood, he will have his ends, and you will loose an opportunity, which may happen, in your present situation, if you will conduct yourself with a becoming resolution, of being a terror to this man of terrors, and to keep him in a subordinate state to you, instead of your being a slave to him.—I am sure he is a fool, as well as a coward, and that it will not be long before he will find, by fatal experience, his whole dependence to rest upon your good sense, care and management; and

then you may make your claims upon him with a certain prospect of success.

“But first of all, as I have intimated to you before, you must appear utterly regardless of his threats and curses: you must make good your quarters, as the soldiers say; you have a right, and you must command a room and table to yourself, as the second son of a baronet; and all the neighbours and all the world will espouse your cause. You must make the servants attend to your orders, which they will heartily do when they see you resolute and determined, to maintain your privileges against an usurping brother, whom, you may be assured, they will most cordially hate and despise, in consequence of your vigorous exertions in support of your own claims to notice and distinction upon the principles of honour, and a dignified condescension in your behaviour to them.”

Imme-

Immediately upon the close of this speech which she spoke with such a real animation of character, that the first actors in the world could scarcely do justice to, in an imitation, she flung herself upon her chair in an agitation of mind bordering upon a fainting fit, as she struggled against the tide of her passions, and endeavoured to compose them to receive the answer of the thunder-struck Charles to her advice.

“You have, Nannette,” he said, after a pause of considerable length, “thrown, by your spirited counsel, such a brilliant light upon my case, which I had considered as quite desperate until this moment of your rousing me from a poor hen-hearted creature, to a perfect man of resolution, that I shall make every advantage of it you can wish. I perceive, Nannette,” he continued, “that the reason of your not proposing violent measures in me, in opposition to my late father’s contemptuous treatment of me, was from

the motive of your extreme good sense, in a just consideration, that such a conduct against a father's cruelty would be a crime, which in a brother's arrogance must be a merit, and the only right way of my proceeding against the violence of his attacks."

"You may be assured, Nannette, that I will follow your advice to the very height of its tendency, whatever may be the consequence. I am no dastard, Nannette, though from my long painful submission even from my infancy, to the overbearing conduct towards me of a prejudiced father, I may appear so to you. To be sure, Nannette, I must confess, that I am by nature of a peaceful disposition, but being now raised by you from the stupor of my senses, which my misfortunes had brought upon me, you shall find me no coward at the bottom. whatever appearances may have denounced against me. I will deserve your approbation if not
your

your applause, by my future actions. Give me a little breath; my plans and determinations are mustering, even while I am talking to you so calmly, rapidly within my breast. I wont say what I will do, but, inspired by you, they shall be such things that shall astonish all Warwickshire at least, if not engage the attention of the whole world."

"Well said Charles," cried Nannette, "I am enraptured with your intentions. They come from you in such a settled mode of expression, that ensures to me their being put in execution, and convinces me of your having felt nothing of your natural courage, until I have shewn you the way to exert it for your own good and reputation. You shall always meet with my approbation and applause, Charles, so long as you continue to act with the bravery of conduct, which you now seem to be resolved upon."

A servant at this instant bringing in tea, with the news of Nannette's father being engaged at a neighbour's house, Charles joined her in a conversation about indifferent matters until the dusk of the evening, when he went home to put in practice the resolutions which he had formed.

C H A P. V.

A STORM AT SIR GEOFFRY'S.

IT was in the beginning of the cheerful month of May, when Charles walked home in one of the finest evenings that lovely season of the year, if genial instead of harsh, which but too frequently happens in this country, produceth. He revolved in his mind, as he went along, the method he was to pursue, in order to wrest his rights, circumscribed as they were, from the grasp of his brother's palpable intention to withhold them from him, and he now recollected a codicil in the will, which he had not thought of since the time of its being read to him, and for that reason I have reserved the account of it for this place, in my relation of the present history.

The deceased knight in his last fit of illness, being seized with some degree of compunction, for his having deprived Charles of any share in his estates, in consequence of the extreme assiduity for his recovery, that the despised youth had manifested in his actions, strengthened by the above-mentioned codicil his claim upon Geoffry, in strictly specifying the sum and manner of the support he should receive from him, viz. That if the brothers should not agree well together at the same table, Charles should have a right to claim a room and one for himself, furnished with a proper portion of viands, two quarts of malt liquor, and a bottle of wine per day. That he should receive ten pounds a year to buy him clothes, with thirty pounds per annum for pocket money. That if he survived his brother, he should have the same right for his support in the house, and the same demands upon his brother's heirs, if he should marry and get any of his own, or to whomsoever Geoffry might think

think fit to leave his property, which the cruel old knight had empowered Geoffry to do in case he should die without issue—Thus marking poor Charles with the stigma of a base-born child from the act of adultery, even at the time of his being somewhat appeased and mollified by the approach of death, and the dutiful conduct towards him of one of the best of youths: so framed by nature to have wrought upon the heart of the most relentless savage upon earth.

Added to the insults offered him in the will, his claims ceased upon Geoffry, &c. the moment Charles should not bear the mortifying condition of residing with a rich brother, rolling in affluence, under such distressed and peculiarly degrading circumstances.

Hard as this case was, Charles found himself obliged to submit to it, with a proof from Sir Geoffry's first attack of illness to him, that it would be one of

the most difficult tasks in the world to make himself in any degree comfortable under its pressure. But excited and inspired by the spirited counsels of Nanette, he entered the door and proceeded in the following way.

Upon his passing through the hall, in order to put his premeditated schemes into execution, he found the servants to be taking Sir Geoffry's supper to him, and that he had a party of toad eaters to spend the evening with him, comprized of a set of such kind of people, who will submit to the humours of the greatest fool and bashaw upon earth, for the sake of the good things he may be enabled to give them.

Seeing this to be the case, and not chusing to join such a crew of poltroons, and moreover, being determined from Sir Geoffry's mal-treatment of him, to separate himself entirely from his table, and to command the one which was due
to

to him; he went into a comfortable parlour, which he had previously fixed upon in his own mind for that purpose, and rang the bell for the attendance of a servant.

An arch boy, his favourite, who dearly loved Charles, for his partiality and kindness to him, and who, though not above twelve years old, possessed that penetration of mind, and goodness of heart, that he saw and felt for the hard lot of so deserving a young gentleman, immediately obeying the summons, he ordered the boy with a steadiness and dignity of countenance, which surprized the youth, as he had never seen any thing of the sort before, to bring him, instantly, lights, a fire, and such part of the supper that was going into Sir Geoffry that he could get, without deranging in any material degree, the entertainment which had been provided for the guests.

The

The boy, overjoyed at the spirit of the command, flew into the kitchen, snatched a couple of lighted candles from a table, left the cook and kitchen wenches in utter darkness, except from the glimmering of a wasted fire, ran and placed the candles upon a table which he hastily set before Charles, returned into the kitchen, seized a warming-pan, filled it with almost the whole remains of the fire, and in a trice he compleatly furnished Charles with the first part of his wants, as he was walking about the room, reflecting upon the probable events which would arise from these proceedings; and fortifying his mind against any opposition, however violent, to his first manœuvres to erect his standard in defence of his kingdom, or the establishment which the will had granted him, of an apartment to himself, and the accomodations explained in it.

Upon the boy's return again into the kitchen, to get a table-cloth, plates, knives,

knives, and so on, in preparation for Charles's supper, the servant girls, who had lighted fresh candles and repaired their fire, hastily asked him "What tricks Sir Geoffry was at now, that he had ordered him to fetch things that seemingly were so unnecessary, as his supper, with all its appurtenances, were gone in to him?"

To which the boy answered, "Why, did not you see Mr. Charles come into the house just now? It is by his orders that I have taken candles, and a fire to him in the blue parlour, and am going again to lay a cloth for his supper."

"You'll be hanged you rogue," exclaimed the girls, "for what you are doing, when Sir Geoffry knows of it. The blue parlour, indeed! Why Mr. Charles never took the liberty of taking it to himself in this manner in his life before."

"I don't

“ I don’t care for that, and Ill be hanged and d——d afterwards,” said the boy resolutely, “ if I don’t do what I am about; and I’ll make the butler bring out of the room from Sir Geoffry’s company, the best dish he can lay his hands on for Mr. Charles, or I’ll lace him, I promise you.—Mr. Charles don’t seem in the humour to be put upon any longer, and I’ll stand by him if nobody else will, to the last drop of my blood.”—So saying, he minded not of a pin the wench’s horse-laugh at him, but he took his cloth, &c. and spread the table in the blue parlour, to the great entertainment of Charles, who was highly delighted with the prompt activity of the lad in his service.

Tom (for that was the name he was called) perceiving Charles’s approbation of his conduct and dispatch, intercepted a footman as he was bringing a roasted untouched chicken from the company, and snatching the dish and its contents
out

out of his hands, and giving the man no time to ask him what he meant, he in an instant placed it on a trevit before the fire in the blue parlour to keep it warm, until he should have time to get every thing else which he intended for the accommodation of the astonished Charles at the celerity and success of his actions.

Tom, immediately upon this, skipped into the passage, seized a plate of asparagus from another servant, and brought it as triumphantly to the side of the chicken; then following up his manœuvres as rapidly as before, he soon had the address, without making any disturbance in the house, of conveying bread, cheese, ale, beer, with tumblers, &c. as a complete assortment of necessaries for Charles sitting down to his supper.

Placing every thing in order for this purpose, he waited at the elbow of his beloved Mr. Charles, during his partaking

ing of the good things he had brought him, with the spirit and delight of a little hero of romance, in defence of a wronged object of tyranny and oppression.

Charles having addicted himself, in some measure, to the amusement of smoking his pipe, to which he had been excited from his only intercourse among men, by the practice of the father of Nannette, and his acquaintance, with whom he had frequently assembled, was always a welcome guest, and had conformed to their ways over the tankard, he now, upon the finishing of his supper, directed Tom to bring him those articles, and to order the butler to send him a bottle of port.

Tom immediately fetching the pipes and tobacco, which were part of the entertainment among Sir Geoffry's visitors, Charles lighted one, and amused himself with it and his ale, while Tom conveyed the message to the butler for the bottle of port.

The

The butler by this time, having completely furnished Sir Geoffry's table, with wines, &c. for the present, had leisure to enquire into the mysterious conduct of Mr. Charles, as he sat over his own supper with the house-keeper, attended by those of the servants, who were enabled to inform him of the exact manner of his proceedings. He had got every intelligence he wished, when Tom entered the room and delivered Mr. Charles's orders for the bottle of port.

The butler was amazed; the house-keeper trembled, but being discreet people, rather advanced in life, and long used to the contentions of the family, they concluded it best, after seriously cussing the matter over between themselves, that the butler should obey the commands of Mr. Charles, and leave him and Sir Geoffry to settle the affair as they might think fit, instead of the butler or the house-keeper officiously obtruding themselves into a contest which they fore-
saw.

saw would soon set the house in an uproar; so that the bottle of port was sent without a word denoting any reluctance in them by Tom to Mr. Charles, which he enjoyed over his pipe, with great satisfaction, while the butler, the housekeeper and the rest of the servants, except Tom, awaited the coming storm in a profound silence of surprize and trepidation.

It was not long that they remained in this state of expectation before they were roused by the actual beginning of the hurricane, in one of the footman's coming with a message to the butler from Sir Geoffry, to know what was become of Charles.

It seems that the guests of Sir Geoffry had urged this inquiry out of their curiosity to pry into the situation and case of the brothers, and their behaviour to each other upon the decease of their father.

The

The butler, very properly, before he went to give in his answer to the question, waited upon Charles to ask him what he must say to Sir Geoffry upon the occasion.

"Why what would you say," replied Charles, "but the truth? Tell Sir Geoffry that I have supped alone in the blue parlour, and that I am now enjoying myself in it with a pipe of tobacco, and a bottle of port."

"I dont know what to think of it," said the butler, "I am afraid there will be strange doings if I inform Sir Geoffry so flatly with your proceedings. Do let me soften my answer to him to keep the peace of the house, which I am certain will be quite overthrown, and changed into great commotions, if I implicitly obey your commands."

"Let the thunder fall upon my own head," said Charles, rising and preparing himself

himself for the onset. "You have acted by my orders, and have nothing to do or to suffer in the matter, but strictly to give into Sir Geoffry, as your answer to him, my precise words, as I have delivered them to you."

The butler bowed and shook his head, as he retired, and Charles sat himself down again, to his pipe and bottle of port.

It may be necessary in this place, furthermore to inform the reader of Charles's former conduct, and situation during the time of his coming from the schools, and residing with his father until his death, that he had seldom even been admitted to dine or sup with him, at his table, but had been reduced to the necessity of getting his meals in the best manner he could without absolutely mixing with the servants; so that his now taking upon himself such a different mode of behaviour, appeared to the butler

ler, and all the servants, the more astonishing, as they had been led to understand, from Sir Geoffry's hints to them about the will, that it was entirely in the power of the knight, to support him in the house, or to turn him out of doors, whenever he should think proper and at a moment's warning.

This being the case with respect to the thoughts of the butler, upon his being obliged to take the painful answer of Charles to Sir Geoffry (for he, as well as all the servants, had a great regard for him, though they never durst shew it) the poor man felt himself so confused upon his entrance into the room to his master, that he could scarcely make the knight understand the real meaning of the words which he delivered to him; but when, at last, by the knight's positive command to have a clear explanation of what the butler was so unwilling to comply with, he obtained from him a thorough knowledge of his brother's resolute
behaviour

behaviour, he conceived it to be so extraordinary and audacious, that he flew out of the room in the most horrid passion imaginable, and appeared before Charles with the rage of a perfect madman, or a wild savage thirsting after the blood of his enemy.

"How dare you, you insolent villain," roared the knight, while his mouth foamed with choler, "take these liberties in my house?"

"How dare you, you more than villain," exclaimed Charles, starting up, "call me by such an opprobrious epithet?—I am no villain,—I am asserting my own rights, and I will maintain them against you and all the villains in the world!"

"Hah!" exclaimed the knight, seizing Charles by the throat,—“get out of the house,—come out with you, I say, you scoundrel!”

“No

"No, no, wicked and vile brother, you are unable to execute your design," cried Charles, as he extricated himself from his grasp, and threw him neck over heels to the farther end of the room.

This scuffle bringing all the servants into the parlour to part the fray, and to prevent mischief, the almost suffocated knight, commanded them to assist him in turning Charles immediately out of doors; but they being roused from their timidity by the manly conduct of Charles, and being urged to side with him from the baseness of the assault of his brother, took no notice of his orders; but decidedly gave him to know, that they would not be the instruments of such an abominable piece of business.

Finding himself baffled in his attempts, as the servants surrounded Charles, he returned to his company, who had heard every thing that had passed, to raise them as a posse in support of his determinations;

nations; but they, seeing a storm which might involve them in trouble or inconvenience, if they interfered in it, acted the part upon this occasion, of true *trencher friends*. They left the distracted knight to deal with his difficulties alone. They rushed out of the house, in order to get rid of him and his affairs, and they made their very masterly and provident retreat to their own habitations, to enjoy themselves with their families in a laugh at his distress.

The knight, overwhelmed with confusion, at his being deserted by his friends, and the resolution which the servants had taken in favour of the cause of Charles, was upon the brink of making his own escape out of the house, under an apprehension that he should be murdered; when Charles, having been acquainted with his terrors, by the house-keeper, who had gone to him, and had endeavoured to appease him, taking all the servants with him, entered the dining-room and exclaimed,—

“What

“What are you afraid of, brother of mine, that you should think of making your escape from me as a man, who, whatever you may justly merit at his hands, in consequence of your base treatment of him, you must know is utterly incapable of any violence against you, but in his own defence. I appeal to your own servants, who were witnesses to it, that you yourself was the aggressor in the tumult which has happened between us; and which shall never happen again, unless you continue your wicked assaults upon me, under the circumstance of my asserting my rights and claims upon you in your house, which I shall certainly do; and which rights and claims upon you I will now explain to your people, so far as it concerns them.

“I have a right in this house,” turning to the butler, “as expressed in the codicil of my late father’s will, to a table to myself, for breakfast, dinner and supper, with two quarts of malt liquor and

a bottle of wine a day, together with the attendance of a servant upon these occasions."

"Shameless brother of mine," he cried, turning to Sir Geoffry, "that you should by your illiberal conduct towards me, force such a pitiful explanation from me to your servants; but as the case is, I will make the best of it, and since you and your people know my intentions, you have only to submit to them, and you now, as well as at all times, may go to bed in perfect safety, from any attempts of mine to disturb your peace."

The knight hung down his head at the close of this speech; Charles retired to his own parlour, and the butler, with the servants, went into the public kitchen, and congratulated one another upon the different face of things, that was likely to take place in the family from the courage and magnanimity of Mr. Charles.

C H A P. VI.

A NEW LEAF TURNED OVER AT SIR GEOFFRY'S.

SIR Geoffry having drank freely the last evening, and having been stunned into a kind of stupor by the unexpected resolute conduct of his brother Charles, slept soundly until about nine o'clock the next morning, when he awoke with a head-ach, and in great perturbation of spirits upon his immediate recollection of the occurrences which had happened, so much to his own disgrace, and to the triumph of the opposition, which he for the first time in his life had met with, in consequence of the violence of his proceedings.

Charles had slept in a course of beautiful representations of the fancy, wherein Nannette, with her spirited counsels, ap-

peared before him in his dreams, and urged him to persist in his present resolute conduct, and not to give way to the natural easiness of his temper.

He rose about seven in the morning, and after amusing himself with a book, he was taking his breakfast in the blue parlour, with great composure of mind at the time Sir Geoffry came down, and repaired to his own apartment for the same purpose; but with an entire set of different feelings to those which his brother experienced upon the occasion.

Alarmed, and not knowing what to do with himself, he walked about the room like a man bereft of his senses. He scratched his head, and pulled up his breeches in the most ridiculous manner possible, as the starts of his mind impelled him to resume his former impetuosity of command over his household.—But being as suddenly checked by those fears for the consequence of his violence now,
which

which had never entered into his head before, he receded from his valorous excitements, as fast as they arose in his mind, and remained in a perfect state of irresolution, until a fit of frenzy, composed of the different ingredients of pride, meanness, desperateness, and fear, caused him hastily to ring the bell for a servant.

The good old butler, with the house-keeper, who had watched his motions, and who were on the verge of going into the room, and of their own accord to endeavour to assuage the troubled emotions of his breast, immediately appearing together before him on the call of the bell, he impatiently asked for his breakfast, as he flung himself into an arm-chair with all the marks of discontent in his manner.

The careful old people having provided his breakfast for him, and having only waited for his commands, it was in-

stantaneously brought by a footman into his room; and they, as well as the man, assiduously attended him, and did and said every thing in their power to reconcile him to his situation, and the present posture of his affairs; declaring repeatedly, that if he would but be at peace with himself, he should never receive any cause of dissatisfaction from them, or the conduct of Mr. Charles; whose behaviour to him, they positively asserted, would always be respectful, so long as he would leave him without molestation to his own enjoyments;—and they pledged themselves strictly to continue their obedience to him, as their master, and never to consider Mr. Charles, but as his younger brother residing in his house; except they should find him, as before, abused and ill treated, and then they declared they would support him at the hazard of their being turned out of their service in the family.

Though

Though these things were said to the knight with the utmost humility of manner, yet their strong tendency in favour of the cause of Charles, sat exceedingly uneasy upon his broiling stomach; and he could hardly refrain from giving abusive instances of his disrelish of their physics, which they plainly discovered to be a most unwelcome and a very nauseous draught.

However, as matters stood in his house, he knew not how to extricate himself from a mortifying predicament, which had entirely originated in his own misconduct; so that he dismissed the butler, the house-keeper and the footman, who had presumed to become his advisers, from his presence, with a fullen direction to them to mind their own business.

They cheerfully went about the same, leaving him to flounder by himself in

the troubled waters he had raised, and I must follow them, to describe their operations, as well as those of Charles and the country people, in consequence of the new leaf, as before-mentioned, which has been turned over at Sir Geoffry's.

C H A P. VII.

NEWS, RUMOURS, AND SURMISES.

AS it may be thought somewhat inconsistent with the character of the butler and the house-keeper, who have been represented as careful, discreet, timid people, and who, upon the first order to them from Charles for his bottle of port, had sent it him under a determination, not to "officially obtrude themselves into a contest which they foresaw would set the house in an uproar;" that they so soon should have changed their minds in a decided resolution to support the cause, at all adventures, of the younger brother; it may be necessary to observe, that during the life of the father, he added such a weight to the insolent behaviour of Geoffry, that they durst not then think of making any opposition to the cruelties inflicted upon the youth; but now that

the old man was gone, there wanted nothing to rouse them out of their state of fear and caution, but the exact kind of courage, which Charles had discovered upon his demise; so that what might seem at first sight (without taking the spirit of the case along with you, gentle reader) to be a very extraordinary incident, is the most natural event in the world.

Upon the butler's return with the house-keeper and the footman into the kitchen among the rest of the servants, who were gaping for the news of Sir Geoffry's conduct this morning, and how he took the behaviour of them all, as well as Mr. Charles, the preceding evening, they were mightily pleased with the account the butler gave them of the knight's seeming to have received such a check to his insolence, that he would not get over for some time at least, and they were on tiptoe to wait upon Mr. Charles in the blue parlour, and to offer their giddy services to him, in the most violent way

way to support him in his rights, and to suppress the knight's abuses, if he should persist in them, with kicks and cuffs, and every species of castigation, which their thoughtless brains, and inflamed passions dictated to them; when Charles, who had been exceedingly attentive to all that had past, and had overheard the tumultuous resolutions of the servants, appeared among them, and in an authoritative manner, that struck them into silence and dismay, he commanded them to mind only their own business, in waiting upon Sir Geoffry with all possible respect, and never to interfere in the matters they had been talking over, except he, himself, should call upon them for their services, in consequence of any future flagrant ill-treatment of him from Sir Geoffry.

Satisfied by these directions, and convinced of their errors, they submitted to Mr. Charles's superior judgment, and quietly repaired to their different employments,

ployments in the house upon his leaving them to their own concerns, in order to wait upon Nannette.

While Charles takes his walk to call upon Nannette, I must attend to the hurry and bustle of the country people, in consequence of the news having reached them of the affray which had happened between Sir Geoffry and his brother Charles, and which, from their imperfect intelligence, rumour had spread among them in a thousand different shapes, and with as many tongues, all tending to convey the most horrid and frightful ideas of the case imaginable.

As I lived at this time in the neighbourhood, and was fauntering among the fields and villages on the morning after the preceding evening's scuffle between the brothers, I had the opportunity to inspect into the merits of a story, as it receives its additions and embellishments in the telling, or as it passes from one person

person to another, until, as the old adage says, a molehill becomes as big as a mountain.

Seeing some rustics gathered together in the yard of a farm-house, listening very attentively to a wandering tinker, who mends their kettles and brings them news, I had the curiosity to hear what the man was so earnestly relating to them.

Upon his beginning, at my request, his tale again, I found that upon his calls during the morning, at some of the people's houses, who had supped with Sir Geoffry when the affray happened, he had gathered from the servants, who were full of the affair, some account of it; and which he had only enlarged upon to the trifling degree of Sir Geoffry's having had one of his legs broke by his brother Charles, in a violent fall which he had given him, and that the constables were upon the look-out for the culprit, in order to take him to Warwick Goal.

Leaving

Leaving him and the astonished rustics, whose surmises upon the occasion amounted to the dreadful conclusion, that poor Mr. Charles would certainly be hanged, I proceeded to the next village, and was surprized to find it crouded with a numerous concourse of people, all with their mouths wide open, swallowing down every strange story they could get of the business in agitation.

Pushing my way into the midst of them, I was thunder-struck at the different tales told of the matter, by the different persons, who had heard the very same account which I had done from the tinker, as he had passed among them in his morning's walk, until he had arrived at the above-mentioned farm-house.

One man swore that the tinker told him, Sir Geoffry had not only one of his legs broken by his brother Charles, but his skull was fractured in the fall, and that

SIR GEOFFRY RESTLESS.

65

that the surgeons were now in the actual operation of trepaning the same to save his life, which was in great danger; and if he should die, Mr. Charles would certainly be hung in chains upon a gibbet as high as Coventry great church steeple. Another man declared that he was told by a neighbour of his, who had heard the tinker's story, that one of Sir Geoffry's eyes was knocked out of his head, and the other was swelled up in such a desperate manner, that he would certainly lose that also.

But what surprized and confounded the people above every thing else in these horrid accounts, was the fresh intelligence we received from a little fellow in a black wig, who came running to us out of breath, and almost suffocated with his news.

As soon as he could speak, and we had gathered about him, he exclaimed, "It is all over with Sir Geoffry,—He is actually

actually as dead as a door nail.—He died but half an hour ago, under the hands of the surgeons, as they were trapping his skull.—For they had no sooner opened it, but out flew all his brains upon them and about the room; and before they could gather them up, and put them in again, to prolong his life, he departed all one as any one of you would do, if I was to get a sledge hammer, and smash your skull into ten thousand broken pieces!"

"Lord! Lord!" cried the good folks, in a yell as terrific as the howl of the American savages: "What a shocking end has the knight come to! God bless him, and may he rest in Abraham's bosom, for he has not had any rest in this world, God knows!"

As soon as they had recovered themselves a little from this dreadful panic, they asked the man for his authority for the woeful account he had given us of the sad end of Sir Geoffry; when he informed.

formed them, that he had it from Dick Swathem, a very discreet thinking man, he said; that Dick Swathem received it from Jack Gulp, who he said was a man not easily to be imposed upon by hearsay accounts; for that he had heard the story related by honest Ned Trickem, who never told a lie in his life; and that Ned Trickem had been an eye-witness to the knight's death, being called in (as he happened to be at the house upon other business at the time) to lend a helping hand to save the poor man's life; he being, he said, as you all know, a mighty clever cow-leech and horse-doctor!"

Upon this proof positive, as the people took it, of the knight's deplorable catastrophe, I trembled for the fate of poor Charles, should any part of the present company meet him, under the violent impressions, which operated like wild-fire upon their passions, of his having murdered his brother, when, lo! I

was.

was released from my apprehensions, by the actual appearance of Sir Geoffry, with two servants in his retinue; riding full speed through the croud, as well as ever he was in his life, to the amazement of the fools, who had swallowed the strange accounts of his broken legs, knocked out eye, fractured skull, and shocking death: and to the utter confusion of the propagators of such ridiculous stories.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

SECOND INTERVIEW OF CHARLES
AND NANNETTE.

CHARLES's walk to visit Nannette, to inform her of his encounter with his brother, and the success of it, in consequence of her spirited advice to him, being through a very retired continuation of meadows, copse, and woods, he escaped the observation of the country people upon the above-mentioned false alarm that had been spread among them, and got clear of any interruption, safe to the presence of the lovely girl, his inspirer and privy-counsellor.

He found, on his entering the room, that he was under the necessity of exerting all the spirit he could muster up, to appease the troubled emotions of her breast, as she leaned upon a sofa, overwhelmed

whelmed with grief and apprehensions for his safety, from her having been prepossessed by the flying reports of the morning, that what had been alledged in them was actually the real state of the case, or something similar to it, in the extravagant punishment which he had inflicted upon Sir Geoffry, on the knight's assault and endeavours to turn him out of the house.

As soon as she perceived him enter the parlour, she started up, all wild, frantic and dishevelled with her agitated affright and mistaken ideas of the matter, and cried "Oh Charles! what have you done? Could I have thought that my advice to you to assert your own rights, only, against an usurping and wicked brother, should have inflamed you to such a degree as to excite you to commit such a desperate act upon him, I would never, never, never, no, never have opened my lips in your cause.—A cause which I supported, as the cause of a very
well

well meaning, quiet, injured man, who I was apprehensive, from the inoffensive temper of his mind, would suffer himself to be most egregiously trampled upon;—When oh! horrible! most horrible! that I should be the innocent instigator to the commission of such a flagitious deed!" she exclaimed, as Charles caught her in his arms, and prevented her from falling in a swoon upon the floor.

As soon as Charles could place her upon the sofa, and by his assiduity recover her sinking spirits, he eagerly cried,—“What deed, Nannette? what crime have I committed, that can affect you in this manner?”

“Is the murder of a brother, no crime?” she exclaimed, looking him steadfastly in the face, while his astonished powers were struck into a state of annihilation at the shocking idea, as he retired from her to a chair, in an utter stupefaction of his senses at the abominable charge.

She

She soon roused him from the absorbed condition of his feelings, in consequence of her mistaking them for the remorse of conscience which suddenly seized upon his vitals from the truth of the allegation, by starting up again, and proceeding in her attack upon him in the following way.

"There needs no other proof," she cried, stamping her foot upon the floor, and staring at him, with the horror in her countenance, that an angel would look upon the most atrocious villain upon earth, "than your own conviction of your guilt, in the manner which you now receive the charge against you.—The compunction which you feel for it, though it shews you have some remains of grace and repentance in you, yet it establishes the fact in my mind beyond the probability of a doubt."

"What fact? exclaimed Charles, raising himself from his stupor with all the accumulated

accumulated marks of indignation, contempt, and resentment in his manner. "What proof have you;" he cried, taking her fiercely by the hand, and forcing her to a seat, "for your wicked charge against an innocent man?"

Hurt, and enraged by the word *wicked*, and the violence with which he accosted her, she rose again like a confirmed little fury, as she at this time completely was, and giving Charles a push which sent him into a corner of the room, she most vehemently asserted that she could bring all the servants in the house, and all the people in the parish, as witnesses to the fact; for that the servants, she advanced, had been running all over the neighbourhood of Sir Geoffry, during the whole course of the morning, and had obtained such an indisputable intelligence of it, that she wondered, she passionately denounced, that he was not ashamed of attempting to seek an asylum in her father's house from the immediate execu-

tion of the law upon him for his offence, when her poor, distracted father, she cried, bursting into tears, had, upon the hearing of the so well corroborated news of his guilt, gone, not more than an hour ago, to be a sharer among his friends in the grief which all good people would experience, from so black a crime, committed by a man, whom they never could have conceived, capable of the deed.

The placid spirit of Charles upon these repeated, and redoubled violences of Nannette's charges against him, was, by this time, changed by his indignation at them, into the perfect heroism of a wronged and injured man. He called her, in an animated rage and disgust, as he advanced to her, a vile retailer of common lies, which if she possessed the least grain of sense, he said, she must have spurned at, and despised, as the fabrication of a set of knaves, for the misleading and entertainment of a parcel of fools. That she was of all the fools in the

parish, the greatest of all those fools, in that her education and reading might have taught her better, than to have listened to the idle rumours of a set of clod-polls, who are for ever upon the gape, and always ready to swallow the most improbable fictions, which the wicked arts of their deceivers can impose upon them; and that he should not be surprized, he continued, if he should, himself, hear to morrow morning, his last dying words and confession of the murder of his brother, brawled among the parishioners, in consequence of his being hanged before ten o'clock, and that, to the amazing edification of the parish, as well as himself, they would all believe it as faithfully as they do the gospel.

Though Nannette, at the beginning of this speech, was rising in anger at it, yet the ludicrous turn Charles put upon it at the end, forced her against all her powers of resistance, into a violent fit of laughter; and she declared, if he had

murdered his brother, he was the most merry rogue in the world; and as the case stood quite otherways in her opinion, from what he had now said, she hoped he would forgive her, as a silly young girl, whose motive for the horror she had expressed at a supposed crime in him, originated in the goodness of her heart, and, particularly, in her over-hasty credulity, and mistaken fears and apprehensions for his safety.

C H A P. IX.

THE FATHER OF NANNETTE.

JUST as Charles was going to give the
appeased Nannette an account of the
particulars of the affray between his brother
and him, which has already been
related, her father entered the room, and
prevented the necessity of it, by his eagerly
embracing Charles, and declaring
that there never was such a set of pol-
troons in the world as the toad-eaters
who had supped with Sir Geoffry, and
who were present at the time of the
transaction,—for that they, he said, in-
stead of putting an immediate stop to
the false rumours which had been spread
among the people, and which might have
hurried them into some desperate act
upon the person of Charles had they met
him in the height of their fury, abso-
lutely, and for mischief sake, had with-

held their interference in the matter, and kept themselves aloof in such a mysterious manner, as to strengthen a vile report, which they enjoyed from no other principle but from the unnatural baseness and depravity of their own hearts.

“ Upon my servants, he continued, bringing me so many and positive accounts, that you had maimed and murdered your brother, although I could not conceive that it was possible for you, should you have met with the most abusive treatment from him, to commit such a crime. yet being impelled and confounded by my fright, at such repeated accounts of the fact, I was led into a conclusion that it was true, and was going to condole with my friends upon the event, when, on my passing over a field that lay near Newsport, a tumultuous cry from a croud of people gathered in the village, led me to the place to enquire what they were about, and

and what violences they seemed to be on the eve of putting into execution.

“ I arrived among them just at the time they had received such a plausible account from a fellow of the murder of Sir Geoffry, that they were all in a tumult to avenge his death, by an instantaneous determination to go in quest of you, my dear Charles, and to tear you to pieces ; and that only in consequence of their misled honest indignation at your crime, Sir Geoffry, having never been the favourite of any body, and being generally hated and despised by the common people.

“ While I was endeavouring to mollify their passions, by representing to all whom I could make hear me, the folly of their hasty resolutions, and earnestly conjuring them to leave poor Mr. Charles to the decision of the law, which had provided an ample punishment for his

crime, without their bringing themselves into trouble about it, Sir Geoffry, with two attendants, rode full speed through the village, and totally put an end to the business;—leaving us in such a dead silence of surprize upon the occasion, that the fools, if not rogues, who had propagated the report, had time to skulk away from among us, without receiving that immediate punishment for their false intelligence, which certainly would have been inflicted upon them, had they awaited the turning tide of the people's passions and rage against them, for the horrible lies which they had been telling.

“As soon as the croud began to separate, I perceived Mr. Ramble, who boards with Mrs. Goose at Kenilworth, and who you know is a very shy gentleman, and so exceedingly addicted to books and wanderings alone, that one cannot get him into company without a monstrous deal of pressing; but the common

mon cause of the mischief which had been afoot, and which had been so happily prevented, by the lucky appearance of Sir Geoffry, drawing us together to talk over it, and to make farther inquiries into such an extraordinary case, we immediately went to the hall, and were astonished to find, as I mentioned before, from a short account which the butler gave us of the circumstances, that six or seven persons in the neighbourhood and village of Newsport, whose names he mentioned, that had supped with Sir Geoffry last evening, could have prevented all the hubbub which we informed him had happened there, if they had thought proper to step forward with the real state of a fact which they had been witnesses to.

“Overjoyed and in high spirits in consequence of things turning out so differently to what I had first apprehended, I asked for you Charles, in order to take you

D 5 home

home with me to dinner, being resolved to have a jolly day with you and some friends upon your escape; but finding that you had taken a walk, as the butler supposed to call at my house, I concluded that I should find you with my Nannette, or some where not far off; so that upon our leaving the hall, I prevailed upon my companion to take pot-lot with me to day, which he told me he would do with infinite pleasure, and he is only gone home upon some business, and will certainly be with us at two o'clock. I was glad to see on my passing through the kitchen, our fine sir-loin of beef roasting at the fire, so that if you will add to it some boiled chickens, and bacon Nannette, we shall have a dinner fit for a king, or at least for ourselves, Mr. Ramble, and four of my old friends whom I will now go for, and bring with me to partake of it."

Mr.

Mr. Ramble, for that is my name, and the person whom the good father of Nannette had met with at Newsport, and accompanied to the hall, and who had received the kind invitation to dine at his house.

I repaired thither exactly to the time fixed, being then first induced to gain a thorough knowledge of the whole business, in order to describe in some way or other the characters of the principal persons concerned in it, and the consequent events which already had happened, and might occur in their future actions, to such a degree of importance, as to afford me, at least, an entertaining relation of them for the perusal of the public.

I found a most hearty welcome from Benevolus, the father of Nannette, with four honest substantial farmers in his company, together with the beautiful and

accomplished Nannette, and the no less handsome and well behaved Charles.

We dined, and spent the afternoon in a very agreeable manner; during which, as all the visitors as well as myself, wished to be acquainted with every particular relating to the affair which had drawn us together, I obtained an account from Charles and Nannette of every transaction, both with respect to Charles's affray with his brother, his instigation to assert his rights by Nannette, the interviews he had had with her, the will, and every thing else which I have described in the preceding chapters.

As the above relations engaged us till it was time to part in the evening, I am not yet prepared to give the reader any farther idea of the character of Benevolus, than the slight traits of him here and in some former part of this performance, so that I must leave what I shall have

have more to say of him to those opportunities, as they will occur in the course of my future acquaintance with him; and in the mean time, and before I take up the subject again, of any of my heroes or heroines, it may perhaps, be necessary to give the reader some farther account of myself.

C H A P. X.

THE AUTHOR.

THAT part of my character which has been mentioned by Benevolus, of my being addicted to books, wanderings alone, and shyness of company, is exceedingly just in a general acceptation of my manners. But at the same time it must be understood, that I have adopted this mode of behaviour from no real objection to society, but from the motive of mixing with mankind whenever I please, or more properly speaking, whenever I find a prospect in so doing of gathering some knowledge in the way of the world for the purpose of improvement, rather than by joining every party in my way, I should fall into the dissipated idle mode of spending my time, which terminates in nothing but an utter relaxation from
thought

thought and a total apathy or in exertion of all the powers of the mind.

From this real statement of my disposition, it has followed through a course of years, which has brought me to the verge of what the girls would call a fussy old bachelor, that I pursue a regular plan of changing my situations in life, as often as I find myself disposed so to do, or that I am become tired of one place of abode, and am urged to seek for another, which a little independent income enables me at all times to accomplish, as a lodger and a boarder in a decent family to my liking.

Kenilworth, which is famous in the history of this country from its castle, the remains of which, or its ruins, are now the delight of every spectator, is well known to be a charming situation for a man who can enjoy the retired pleasures of a residence in one of the finest villages in the world. Its walks are exceedingly agreeable

agreeable and amusing, and the road to Warwick and Coventry, on which it stands, in the midway of five miles distance from each, is absolutely, I believe, the best road in the kingdom.

Courted by an intelligence which I received of the beauties of this spot, on my last intended change of situation, I repaired to it with great expectations of a pleasing retirement from a town life, which I had been engaged in for some time, and grew tired of; and I must do this village the justice to say, that although I am very little known in it, pay or receive very few visits, and am generally looked upon as a strange queer sort of fellow, I have continued in it as a boarder with Mrs. Goose, at her neat little house by the side of the castle from the beginning of May 1788, to this time the beginning of May 1790, with so much content and satisfaction, that I at present think I shall be a fixture in the place to the end of my days, without a suggestion entering

entering into my head of my former inclinations for novelty of site, so inexhaustible have those resources been administered to me, in my partiality for the comforts and pleasures which I here enjoy.

Mrs. Goose, the person whom I board with, is a very handsome widow, possessed of a small competency, no children, a great deal of loquacity, rather silly, but very diverting.

We agree exceedingly well together: for however noisy she is sometimes, it never disturbs my quiet, my sitting parlour being at a distance from her apartment, and she never obtrudes herself upon me, but when I feel myself inclined to listen to her tales about her own concerns, or those of her neighbours, in which she is very prolix and learned, but never mischievous.

She has a pretty servant girl that waits upon us both occasionally, and a willing

willing lad to take care of an elegant small garden in the front of my parlour window, to run of errands, to clean shoes, and to lend an helping hand in every other department of our affairs.

Thus situated, we are the happiest folks conceivable; our domestic disturbances, which will sometimes happen in the best regulated families, being always of such a trifling nature, that they are forgotten as soon as over; and as they last but for a very short space of time, they only appear, as interruptions to our felicity, like spots in the sun, marked indeed, but taken no notice of, as material objects to impede his or our progress to the main purposes for which we were designed by the great God that made us.

The seat of Sir Geoffry, the farm of Benevolus, and the village of Newsport, which have composed the scene of the preceding transactions, lie each of them within

within a mile and half of Kenilworth, so that I am always at hand to fly to any one of them as occasions and circumstances may offer.

The house and situation of Benevolus having been described, it may be necessary to observe respecting the seat of Sir Geoffry, that it is an old mansion, situated upon a flat, and such as you frequently find in the possession of the descendants of an ancient family, whose genius never led them to improvements of any kind in conformity to the modern taste. It therefore now appears a substantial edifice of some centuries standing;—looks venerable, moss-grown, but not decayed; and the thick rusty garden walls, the rough hewn stabling, and other offices, afford a similar idea of its antiquity to the spectator; while the nearly sapless, but sturdy avenue of oaks in front of the pile, corroborates your impressions of its early date, and of its having received from its origin no alterations whatsoever.

Its

Its environs are the gloomy haunts of the nightly birds of dismay; the frightful resorts of the hooting and restless screech-owl, the melancholy and cheerless residence of the "shard-born beetle," the offensive bat, and the envenomed toad.

The village of Newsport has nothing remarkable in it, except its being populous, and inhabited by a croud of rustic news-mongers.

Thus having cleared the way, as far as my own character or concerns have any thing to do in the history I am writing, I will hasten with all convenient speed into the field of action, which is before me, and proceed in my description of the war of the little world I am in, with the most EXEMPLARY IMPARTIALITY.

C H A P. XI.

A GLORIOUS LIMB OF THE LAW.

IT is time now to return to Sir Geoffry, whom as the reader will recollect, the butler, the house-keeper, and a footman, left at his breakfast, in a very fullen humour, in consequence of their advice and admonishment to him, to be satisfied and contented under the mortifying situation he had brought upon himself, of his being reduced to the necessity of having the rights of his brother to a subsistence in his house, wrested from him, by the manly conduct of Charles, and the co-operation of the servants in his cause, instead of his having peaceably, and without violence or abuse, on his part, freely and generously consented to fulfil his engagements to Charles, as expressed by the will of his deceased father.

Upon

Upon the butler, &c. leaving him to "flounder in the troubled waters he had raised," as before-mentioned, he became the more restless and confused, the more he pondered over the degrading predicament into which his violence, and abusive treatment of his brother had drawn him. Impelled by a thousand different starts and suggestions of his bewildered mind, that instigated him to reassume his former consequence and tyranny over his family, he came at last, as a dernier resort upon his fore case, to the sudden resolution of consulting his attorney. The way to this limb of the law laying through the village of Newport, was the cause of his passing so hastily the croud there, at the time the people had received, as they thought, an indisputable intelligence, and a positive proof of his death.

Upon his arrival at the house of his attorney, he was received by that gentleman with all possible marks of respect, notwithstanding the manner of his address

dress was fraught with every token of disquietude and dissatisfaction respecting the attorney's conduct, in his fixing to his father's will a codicil, so distinctly and particularly specified, that he found himself bound and obliged to submit to support his abhorred brother under his roof, as a gentleman;—and he swore if he (the attorney) could not set it aside by some art or trick of the law, he would never employ him again.

The attorney being a man reputable in his profession, and withal extremely desirous to settle the differences among his clients, in an amicable way, rather than for the sake of emolument to himself, to push on business at the risk, and perhaps, the total ruin of his character, mildly undertook the arduous task of dissuading the knight from an attempt, at once so fruitless and so base.

He informed Sir Geoffry, that he had done nothing more, with regard to the codicil, but in strict compliance to the instructions given by his late father, at the time it was added to the will, and in a mode of specification, that every professor of the law was bound in honour to substantiate to the best of his ability. He declared that the intention of his father in favour of Charles, was so indisputably established by the codicil, that it would be downright madness in him (the knight) to think of revoking such a firm and unalterable bequest: and he represented to him the endless anxieties and troubles he would bring upon himself, should he apply to any worthless practitioner of the law, who might undertake such a wicked cause as his was, merely and for the sole purpose of picking his pocket.

Upon the knight's flying into a rage, in consequence of this check to his intended proceedings against his brother, and declaring

declaring that he would persist in his resolution, to the hazard of half his fortune, if there was an attorney in the kingdom who would undertake the business, the above-mentioned glorious limb of the law, gave Sir Geoffry to understand, that he would never more accept of him as his client, in any concerns whatever; but that he would on the contrary, totally espouse the cause of his brother Charles, against any of his base attacks, to the expence of all he had gained in the upright discharge of his duty; and he furthermore declared, that he would sooner risk inevitable perdition, than be an unconcerned spectator of the ruin of an oppressed youth who had no money of his own, to empower him to withstand such, his brother's, meditated most cruel and abominable designs.

The knight was so exasperated at his hitherto meeting with nothing but opposition upon opposition. to his vile proceed-

ings, that he employed three days with the utmost vehemence in search of a pettifogger in the county of Warwick, to transact the above business, without finding *one* that would undertake his cause, so remarkable is Warwickshire for HONEST LAWYERS.

C H A P. XII.

THE STILL MORE GLORIOUS CHARLES.

ON his return from this fruitless expedition, he became in a manner quite mad. His disappointments seemed to have subverted the small remains of his understanding. He discharged in a fit of fury, the butler and all the servants, from his house, except Tom, whom Charles insisted upon his remaining in it, to wait upon himself, and a greasy fat cook maid, who had all along enjoyed and chuckled over the fun, as it appeared to her, of the uproar among the contending parties, without entering so pointedly into the views of them as the rest of the domestics had done, though she was at the bottom, a determined friend to the cause of Charles. The couple of servants who had sedulously attended Sir Geoffry in his

ride through the county in search of a pettifogger, were dismissed among the rest, because the knight conceived that they secretly derided him, and were pleased with his distresses. He offered large wages for a fresh set of servants by hand-bills, which were distributed about the county without effect. Nobody would come near him. The report of his bad conduct throughout the whole of his behaviour, since the death of his father, having spread like a pestilence, so much, and so truly to his disadvantage.

In this deplorable situation he would have been utterly lost in the regions of despair, or have laid violent hands upon himself, had it not been for the noble and disinterested endeavours of Charles, to bring him to his senses, and in some measure to a right understanding of his case, and the way he must pursue in order to reinstate himself in his former splendid situation as a knight, surrounded
by

by a faithful set of domestics, and a retinue adequate to his fortunes.

He forced him, in a manner, to recall his discarded people, and by his influence over them, he hurried them back to their places, and different departments in the family. He set every thing to rights according to the former establishments of the household, and did all in his power to turn the furious tide of the wrath of the country against him, into a peaceful stream of commiseration for a man, whom he now represented to have been instigated by a wild distracted habitual state of mind to his late wicked courses, rather than by any settled purposes of an incorrigible villain. He exerted all the efforts of the best of youths to reclaim his brother, and succeeded so far as to reconcile him, apparently, to the present posture of his affairs.

Happy and delighted in doing *good* for *evil*, the benevolent Charles kept a watchful eye over his brother, in order to prevent, as far as in him lay, the restless temper of the knight from plunging him into any farther difficulties and embarrassments.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIII.

SIR GEOFFRY TAKES OUT A DEDIMUS TO ACT AS
A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE AT WARWICK.

SIR Geoffry finding himself baffled and restrained by the resolute conduct of Charles, and his family, to oppose his domestic tyranny, he turned his thoughts to his more general extravagances.

During the course of his ensuing proceedings he always behaved with a full reserve to Charles. The brothers never dined together, seldom spoke to each other, unless at those times, as will be seen, when Charles obtruded his advice upon the knight in consequence of his fooleries, or checked his arrogance and impetuosity.

He now got about him his usual acquaintance, the principal of whom was

one Selim Slim, a presbyterian parson, who formerly had distinguished himself as a philosopher, but who, at this time, had utterly lost himself in religious disputations, and had become the derision of his preceding admirers.

Impressed by this man's wild notions of the blessings of changes and innovations without end, he never knew what he was about. He was always bewildered, unsettled, and confused. The frightful maze which Selim threw him into respecting religious controversy, operated upon his imagination like a perturbed dream in all his other speculations. He never could bring himself to a decided determination upon the plainest facts, but past his life in such a continued train of doubts and irresolutions, that he was the most miserable sceptic upon the face of the earth, excepting *only*, his tutor Slim.

His

His ideas upon civil government were no less extravagant and absurd than Slim's, or Slim's friend Slug, who has pestered the world so much about the American revolution, and the pure democratic form of its present government, as a circumstance of all things to be wished to take place in this or any other country, at the hazard of any commotions whatever, notwithstanding the constitution of England, establishes the freedom of its inhabitants upon the firmest basis.

After various conversations upon the above business with his friend Slim and others his instigators, he was prevailed upon to take out a dedimus to act as a justice of the peace at Warwick, as an asserter of their cause; and, at the next sessions of parliament, to offer himself as a member for the county.

Though the knight was not a dissenter, yet he was one of those fools of the
E 6 church,

church, who are misled by the specious arguments of the leaders of that body, and he entered into their measures, by making himself a justice immediately, and by an endeavour to gain an interest among his neighbours to support him at the next general election.

C H A P. XIV.

THE KNIGHT'S SPEECH TO THE MAGISTRATES
AT THE COUNTY SESSIONS.

SIR Geoffry having got his commission, repaired in great state to the meeting of the justices at Warwick, on the first day of the sessions. As his title and property in the county ensured to him that regard from the bench which he would not otherwise have met with, he was received by the very respectable magistrates, with all possible politeness and civility. Though, from their perfect knowledge of his character, they thought him by no means any acquisition to their body.

On his entrance into court, the chairman rose and bowed to him, while the rest made room for him in a convenient situation.

After

After the chairman had given a most excellent charge to the grand jury, in which he had expatiated much upon the increasing profligacy of the common people, and that it was become absolutely necessary to restrain them from committing the most daring crimes, by a severe punishment of many notorious culprits, who were now to be brought to the bar, Sir Geoffry rose, and begged leave to make a few observations upon the charge, and its tendency; and to propose some schemes of his own and his friends, to the magistrates, which he conceived would have a much better effect.

Notwithstanding the irregularity and impropriety of this proposal of the knight's, the oddity of it took with the whole court, and excited a curiosity in every individual, to hear what such a strange kind of creature had to say upon the business.

The

“The misfortune is, gentlemen,” said Sir Geoffry, “that you will not pay that attention to the natural and unalienable rights of men, which my friend Mr. Selim Slim the presbyterian parson has so repeatedly offered in his writings to your serious consideration, otherwise there would be no cause for your great trouble with these poor people.

“If you would allow them to live in a perfect state of civil liberty, or, according to the tendency of my friend’s arguments upon this subject, to leave them to their own free will, to do what they pleased, without any restraint or check upon their actions, you would deprive them of the only means of doing mischief, and of every excitement to the commission of crimes.

“There is a natural promptitude in the human race to do those things which they are forbid to do.—This, gentlemen, is a position, as fixed and determinate, as
any

any of the best established axioms handed down to us by the wisest of the ancient philosophers. This perfect knowledge of the human heart, of the ancient sages, as well as of my friend Mr. Selim Slim, produced the golden age so famed in story; as also, the free and happy country of Utopia, as described by that renowned philosopher Sir Thomas More, to have been founded upon the principles which I have now the honour to lay before you; and which I shall illustrate by many examples, and inferences, if I may be permitted to proceed with my remarks."

The business of a sessions, or an assize being so very tedious that any intervening foolery to raise a laugh is always acceptable, Sir Geoffry received the unanimous consent of the court to go on with his observations, which he did in the following words.

"In proof of my position," continued Sir Geoffry, "that there is a natural promptitude

promptitude in the human race to do those things which they are forbid to do, I shall first of all appeal to your own knowledge of the cases that have been, and are now to be brought before you.

“What excitements can a man have to plunder his neighbour in a land of commerce, like this, where the doing those injuries to the public, give him more trouble, and put him to the exertion of more labour and painful watchings than he would experience in a regular and peaceful discharge of his duty, in some profitable occupation or other that every man is fit for? It is from the pleasures of adventure, and in defiance of the restraints you put upon him, in order to prevent him from doing what he pleases, that causes him to commence a robber or a murderer, and to continue in those wicked practices, merely in opposition to those laws which you have provided to suppress them, and not out
of

of any real or primitive baseness, or depravity, that exists in the human breast.

"The history we have of the nymphs and swains of Arcadia, and the innocent and happy lives they lived, in consequence of their knowing no laws but their own wills, is a farther proof of my position, that your restraints upon your people only stimulate them to the commission of those crimes, which they would not think of, but upon that account.

"In continuation of my remarks upon the common people, and with what scorn they look upon your supposing them to be capable of injury to your property, I will just take notice, for instance, of the manner in which you insult their feelings, by fixing posts by the side of your parks and gardens, with boards at the top of them, on which are written "man traps and spring guns are placed about these premises;" thereby urging a spirit among them, in opposition to such abusive

abusive language, levelled at their supposed natural baseness, and fixing a stigma upon their whole body as a pack of scoundrels, to knock down your posts, rob your gardens, and perhaps your houses, merely upon the principles of revenge, and retaliation upon you, for these abominable public marks of contempt, by which you thus palpably and unnecessarily throw them into the lowest and most abject state of disgrace, and draw upon your own heads, those mischiefs which you experience and complain of, simply and entirely from the indignation with which you, yourselves, by these means so foolishly stir up and inflame their minds.

“ Before I give you my opinion with regard to the present objects of your intended castigation, and the severe punishment you seem to think it so necessary to inflict upon them for their crimes, let me take a view of your restrictions upon a more general scale, and the way in which

which they operate upon the inhabitants of this country at large.

“The indissoluble knot of marriage, with which you allure the fond and impassioned pairs to engage themselves in (who at the time of their enamoured and violent raptures with each other, foolishly conceive that their present transports will last for ever) is one of the most cruel and absurd advantages you take upon the ignorance and simplicity of young people, that could be proposed for their mutual disappointments, and endless sorrows; and produces a train of the worst of calamities, that an avenging Demon, with all the infernals at his back, could muster up to *plague* the human race withal.

“The God of love spurns at all restraints, he is as free as air, and delights himself no less in variety, than the goddesses of nature; whose passion for novelty is so strong, that her works abound, in
such

such an inexhaustible fund of changes as to obviate the enumeration of them by the most laborious and accurate researches; and to elude the most prying and penetrating human eye, in its attempt to unravel, or get to the bottom of, her more secret practices, in the unfathomable depths of the variety of her operations.

“She, no doubt, has placed her affections very powerfully upon the sturdy and venerable oak, and all the forest trees, of various descriptions. But she seems still more to be captivated with the rose and lilly, and the ten thousand times ten thousand different species of spring flowers with which she decorates the earth; but which she so soon grows tired of, that, after a very short enjoyment of their charms, she suffers them to fade away, and to die, as she betakes herself to fresh delights and revelry, under the influence of the god of day, and basks in the heat of summer by the side
of

of the clear stream or fountain, captivated with the refreshing breezes; while the rich prospect of the enripening fields of corn, the sound of the mowers scythe, the jolly hay-makers, the bottle handed about, as chearful rural jokes and merriment go round among the nymphs and swains, afford to the goddess of nature such a zest to her present enjoyments, that she forgets her former ones, and seems to be fixed here, unalterably to the end of her existence.

“ But vain is the postulatum.—She soon sickens and loses her appetite for these pleasures, as the autumn advances, and offers to her delight in novelty, its various and unbounded treasures.

“ Nature being at last tired of autumn, she consigns herself to the rigid and inclement scenes of winter; and seems glad to get rid of all her past pleasures, in a temporary dissolution or death, in order to her being enabled to renew them with
fresh

fresh vigour, upon the advance of the ensuing seasons; so prone is nature to variety, that no scenes last long with her, before she becomes jaded and dissatisfied with them.

“As to the God of love, his freaks and vagaries are a mockery upon your restraints;—his excitements to novelty are so powerful, that the fondest pairs that were ever wheedled into the cage of matrimony, which you have provided as a trap to ensnare them with, very soon after the first transports of their enjoyment of each other are over, find by woeful experience, that they have been misled and imposed upon; and pant for their freedom from the shackles with which you have bound them, and for that variety, which nature cries out in all her works, they are entitled to.

“I will throw a veil over the state of cuckoldom in this country, which is not more monstrous than your restraints, that
are

are the cause of it; and while the beasts of the fields, and the birds of the air, are left, by the all-wise Creator, at perfect liberty, to enjoy in infinite variety their amorous sports, I have only to say that your restrictions upon mankind, with respect to the affairs of love, are the more abominable, as they operate not only as an indignity, and a disgrace upon the human kind, but produce that common prostitution of a part of the female sex, for the purpose of satisfying the violent thirst for variety which predominates in the human passions; and which is the cause of those debilitating diseases, those contaminating disorders, whose progress, as a pestilence, from father to son, falls foul upon your progeny, in your well-known propagation of a rotten race of lazars.

“As these disorders are not known among the beasts of the fields, and the birds of the air, who range at will, and fix upon what partners they like, abide by,

by them as long as they please, and change as often as their inclinations lead to variety, how contrary then, in this instance, to the dictates of nature, are the preposterous indignities which you offer to her suggestions, in the cruel laws of marriage, by which the hapless pairs are tied to each other for life, live but to grow hateful and disgusting to themselves, while they seek for novelty in the manner above described; and entail upon their miserable progeny those pestilential diseases, as a punishment for the violences which you offer to the goddess, against all her ways, and in direct opposition to every particular instance of her passion for change?

“ In order that I may not detain you any longer with a thousand different instances from those which I have but slightly touched upon, and all tending to prove the same thing, the folly of your restraints upon your people, I will advert to the cases immediately before you;

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and

and with my advice upon that head, conclude all I have at present to say upon the subject.

“ I desire that you will instantaneously order all the prisoners chains to be knocked off, that you will immediately send them about their business, with notice to them, that they are at full liberty to do what they like, and I am confident they will do no harm.

“ I would have you, as soon as convenient, send all the lawyers in this country to Botany Bay; and keep all your felons at home; thereby getting rid of all your mischief-makers, and reclaiming all your rogues, in the manner I have described; by suffering them to enjoy the “ natural and unalienable rights of men”.

“ Thus by your making away with your judges, counsellors and attorneys, you will make way for perfect freedom, which

which will follow of course, in a sweet stream of harmony; and set you all to rights.

“ The load of expence incurred by maintaining this useless branch of the legislature, will go a great way towards the liquidation of the national debt; which is become a horrid incumbrance upon our country, and will end in its ruin, if not stopped in time by this mean; and, in particular, by a scheme which my friend Mr. Selim Slim, the presbyterian parson, has proposed to you in his writings; and which I, as well as all good and sound politicians and moralists, approve of exceedingly,

“ This scheme of my friend's which you all very well know, is the total abolition of the hierarchy, or priestly government; which if laid as it ought to be, totally in the dust, and the religion of *nature*, or *no* religion were to take place of it, what an additional accumulation to

the riches of the state would be the consequence, as well as that general harmony of society contained in my friend's proposals in this business. Proposals which have been so *long* before you, and are so *well understood*, that it is needless in me to profane so divine a theme of this immaculate philosopher, by any observations of my own, upon such a celestial assemblage of blessings which would deluge this country, would you but take up, and agree with the whole train of innovations, with respect both to civil and religious liberty, which, as from the penetrating eye of a demi-god, my friend Mr. Selim Slim has so lavishly offered to your consideration."

The knight, on his sitting down at the conclusion of his speech, received a loud laugh from the court in consequence of it, which he mistook for a token of great applause, and seemed highly pleased; but he had the mortification, notwithstanding his advice to the contrary, of seeing

seeing the prisoners brought to the bar, of hearing their trials, which were investigated with much accuracy, and of finding them, at length, consigned, by the unanimous consent and award of the jury and magistrates, to those severe punishments which they so richly merited for their crimes.

Sir Geoffry, all in confusion at seeing things turn out so differently from what he had expected, slunk out of court, dismayed and confounded, and repaired to his friend Selim Slim the presbyterian, parson, whom he had left at his own house, scribbling away at a terrible rate, in order to inform him of the success of his embassy.

C H A P. XV.

SELIM SLIM'S FIT OF PHRENZY, IN THE PRESENCE OF SIR GEOFFRY RESTLESS, AND NATHANAEL SLUG.

UPON the knight's return home, he found Selim very busy over his papers of controversial matters, in which he was writing answers to a multitude of opponents to his schemes of innovation, whom he had raised against him, by frequent public invitations for that purpose; and, consequently, had set himself up as a butt or mark, for all persons, at will, to shoot their arrows at.

He had with him Nathanael Slug, the calculator; and it was a blessed sight to behold this brace of philosophers, in their different modes of procedure, as they were employing themselves in the great business of altering the affairs of

the government of this country, and the manifest absurdity attendant upon their actions.

While Slim was scratching his pate, to get some fresh nonsense out of it to puzzle and perplex his adversaries, and to gather from his disordered brains an endless fund of disputation upon nothing, it was laughable in the extreme to observe Slug poring over his calculations, in all the stupidity of feature conceivable, for the purpose of proving by them the ruin of this most flourishing country.

The contrast between these heroes exhibited a very lively picture of indiscriminate rage, on the one hand, and of a settled despondency on the other, both consigning these kingdoms to immediate perdition, unless they would be ruled by this wonderful pair of wiseacres that have so long pestered the public with their follies.

Soon

Soon after Sir Geoffry entered the room, and the above sages were disengaged from their immediate pursuits, Slim hastily asked the knight how he had succeeded at the sessions, and what use he had made of the instructions which he had given him.

Sir Geoffry repeated as much of his speech to the magistrates as he could remember, and, in doleful accents, informed Slim of their utter inattention to his counsels.

Upon this scornful treatment of Sir Geoffry by the magistrates, and, in particular, the very pointed contempt which they had, through the knight, cast upon his own pains and labours to improve and amend the government of England, Slim flew into the most violent passion. He called the magistrates a pack of fools and the greatest of blockheads. He swore that there was not a grain of sense in the kingdom, but what was possessed by him-

F 5

self

self and his friend Slug; and that he would blow up all the opposers to his schemes of innovation, root and branch, before he had done with them.

In the heat and violence of his passion, he denounced vengeance upon the chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Pitt, for his opposition to the instructions which he sent him, by letter, in the decided part the young *idiot* took against him, in the house of commons the 2nd of March, 1790, when the odds were 189 against the repeal of the test act.

He railed, most bitterly, against the ministers, in that they would not let him have access to the king, in order to his being enabled to prove to his majesty, that he was a nincompoop for suffering himself to be guided by the counsels of such a nest of insects. That he would, by the strength of his own proper and individual powers, if he was permitted to give his advice, personally, to the king,
teach

teach him better;—that he would convince his majesty of the absolute necessity there was for him to divest himself of all regal authority, and to give up the sole guidance of the state to his own more sovereign abilities, which would not fail, in due course of time, to render this nation the envy of the world, and the freest government, except that of *France*, upon the face of the earth.

As he grew warm with his subject, he soon fancied himself the arbiter of the universe. He declared, by the mighty efficacy of his own supereminent and wonderful knowledge of mankind, the whole arcana of science, and the policy of states and kingdoms, that he would prove to a demonstration, that the world, in general, had been in the wrong ever since the beginning of it; and that it was only reserved for *him*, by his transcendent talents, to set the universe to rights; which he would do, he said, in the twinkling of an eye, so soon as he could, by

his admission to an interview with the king of England, be empowered to persuade his majesty to accede to the irresistible force of his arguments.

In the course of Selim's progress of rectifying the world, he became as furious as a Turk, and seemed rightly named after some of the turbulent tyrants of the Ottoman empire. His frequent disappointments had so wrought upon his imagination, that he perfectly raved. He seemed like a wild and noxious animal beset in the toils; and fought against his assailants with the feeble desperation of a defeated monster; until the fury of his mind hurried him into such a deplorable fit of phrenzy that he was obliged to be taken out of the way, and put to bed; lest, by his violences he should do some unguarded injury to his more serious friend Nathanael Slug, and the all astonished Sir Geoffry; who wondered that there could possibly be a man upon earth so much more restless than himself.

C H A P. XVI.

THE DEPLORABLE CASE OF SELIM SLIM.—HIS
AMAZING PERSEVERANCE.

AFTER Selim was put to bed, for it was in the evening that Sir Geoffry returned from the sessions, and gave the rueful account of his reception there, which threw the enraged Slim into the fit of phrenzy, as described in the last chapter, Nathanael Slug attempted to draw the knight's attention to his own particular affairs, respecting his calculations; in which, by a long train of figures that would pose the devil himself, to get to the bottom of, or to fathom an abyss so much below his infernal regions, he endeavoured to possess Sir Geoffry with the most terrible ideas of the inevitable and immediate ruin of this country. But the check the knight had met with at Warwick

wick, in consequence of the proposals he had offered to the magistrates there, and which he had been instigated to do by the advice of Slim, dwelling very much upon his mind, for the present, he paid no attention to Slug's calculations, but fell asleep over them, to the utter confusion of this so profound a diver into the immeasurable depths and secret recesses of future events; which, however probable they may seem from present appearances, they in general elude the eye of the most penetrating human foresight, and turn out quite different from the most positive assurances, and accurate investigations of the wisest of philosophers and reasoners upon the subject.

Sir Geoffry's drowsy fit and inattention to the bewildered calculations of Slug, of course, consigned them both to the arms of Morpheus, but the sun had no sooner gilded the hemisphere, the next morning, than the servants were roused, by the cries of Slim, who, in his perturbed dreams

dreams during the night, of carrying on his wars against his opponents, had so agitated his bowels, that the effects of the troubled commotions in them had fallen foul upon the sheets; and reduced him to the most miserable plight, that could be imagined to happen to such a perfect demi-god; whose supernatural excellences no one could conceive to be liable to any human frailties, or disasters; but especially of the deplorable kind, as above intimated to the reader for his own proper edification, and in order to prevent him from supposing that the first of heroes and of philosophers, is not subject to the misfortunes attendant upon the lowest and the most abject of the sons of men.

Two of the maids who first heard his cries, supposing him to be taken ill, but not of the disorder in question, rushed hastily into the room, and as suddenly retired; the sight of his condition shocking their feelings, and urged, at the same

same time, a most violent laugh from them, as they, almost ashamed to speak of it, endeavoured to make the men understand what was the matter.

The footmen at length, getting scent of the business repaired to the philosopher, who continued his cries and the ringing of his bell, with great fury, and were surprized at his being so far from endeavouring to make a secret of his case, that he ordered them to take the nuisances away, and to bring him fresh sheets immediately, without the least appearance in his manner of doing it, of any delicacy in his composition, or the smallest apology uttered to them, for such an offensive office as he was putting them to; so much above the common rules of decorum was this great disputant upon civil and religious liberty.

The story, however, getting wind among the tea-tables in the country, it was thought he would not have the face to

to appear in public, in this part of the world any longer; but to the wonder of the inhabitants, he continued his walks among them with the same cocked-up head, and lath-like gait as before, quite regardless of every disaster, or shameful situation, which his floundering in a sea of troubles had brought upon him.

As soon as he came down to breakfast in the morning, he passed over the ludicrous hints of Sir Geoffry and Slug, concerning what had happened to him, as a thing of no consequence; and immediately fell to his papers, with a renovated vigour that astonished them.

His perseverance caught fire upon every overthrow. He claimed the victory after every trial, and triumphed in his own defeat. His disappointments and mortifications, the more they plunged him into such a maze of difficulties, that all other men would consider as a lost and irrecoverable state of confusion, only served

served to stimulate him to proceed, at all adventures, to disentangle himself from the labyrinth he had got into; and though on all hands he had been worsted, yet he had the wit, from the most positive assurances that he should, notwithstanding all present appearances against him, conquer in the end, to persuade many fools still to support him in his fruitless undertakings, and to engage themselves, to stand by him to the last drop of his ink.

C H A P. XVII.

A BATTLE BETWEEN THE BEST FRIENDS IN
THE WORLD.

DURING these transactions Charles had not been idle or inattentive; though in all his ways he had preserved that easiness of manner which was natural to him, excepting only when he was roused by extreme necessity to take a decided part against the absurdities of the knight.

He had not interfered at all with Sir Geoffry's being instigated by Slim and Slug, to take out a dedimus to act as a justice at Warwick, for he well knew that that step would be the means, if any thing could, of giving the best check in the world to his reasons for so doing, when he came to explain the absurdities
of

of Slim's plans of civil and religious liberty before the magistrates.

He rejoiced in the defeat of this triumvirate of wiseacres, Slim, Slug, and Sir Geoffry, at the sessions, and took the first opportunity after Slim's deplorable case, as described in the last chapter, to remonstrate calmly with his brother upon the ridiculous predicament he had been led into by his nonsensical advisers, and prevailed so far upon him, for the present, as to cause him to be dissatisfied with their proceedings; a thing not very difficult to do, from the inconstancy of his temper.

Though the knight did not love Charles, but on the contrary, had a manifest aversion to him, yet he had been so struck with his brother's resolute opposition to him in his domestic concerns and tyranny, that he now was in a great measure afraid of him, and listened to him, when he stepped forward upon any material

rial affairs with much attention, and generally followed his advice for a time, notwithstanding he might in the course of a few hours, or as many days, at least, run directly counter to every thing which had been said to him.

However, on the present occasion, he was so steady as to behave himself very flightingly towards Slim, and Slug, in consequence of his disgrace through them at Warwick; and when, after a few days had elapsed, they desired him to give them some account of the change of his deportment, he flatly told them that, notwithstanding his former protestations to set himself at the head of their schemes of innovation, he now looked upon them to be nothing better than a couple of impostors, who had put him upon a monstrous piece of business; and he begged of them that they would retire from his house immediately.

This

This, so unexpected an intimation from a man who had taken them under his roof as his bosom friends, and had all along so implicitly abided by their counsels, that he seemed perfectly convinced of the soundness of their doctrines, and entirely unshaken in his espousing and supporting them against all opposition whatsoever, threw Slim into an excess of passion more violent than any of his former ones, and caused, even Slug, to start from his chair, with very strong marks of resentment in his countenance.

Selim's rage hurried him beyond all the bounds that common sense could set up against his unguarded folly and the fury of his proceedings. He called Sir Geoffry a vile cowardly apostate from the sublime principles of civil and religious liberty, and the natural and unalienable rights of men, which he was sorry to find he had taken such extraordinary pains to instil into the mind of a wretch, who, from the trifling consideration of an inattention

tention to them by such egregious fools as the justices at Warwick, had shamefully given them up, like a mean spirited scoundrel as he was.

This abusive language raising the knight into almost as great a passion as Slim, they instantly fell to loggerheads; and though Sir Geoffry had been entirely defeated in his late scuffle with his brother Charles, he was more than a match for Selim, and would have soon pommelled him confoundedly, had it not been for the fly, and insidious tricks of Slug; who, by frequently catching at the knight's clothes behind and tripping up his heels unperceived, prevented, for some time, the complete overthrow of his friend Slim, and proved himself to be a notable second to his hero.

The noise of this fray, though it was exceedingly loud on the part of Slim and the knight, who swore at, and called each by the most opprobrious epithets, during
the

the course of it, did not reach any of the servants except the butler, until it met with a fair decision from the appearance and exploits of the latter personage, on his being hurried into the field of battle by the clamour attending it.

The butler rushing into the room just at the instant of one of Slug's unfair tricks, to the knight's prejudice, and in favour of Slim, he was so nettled at it, that mustering up in his mind all his youthful feats as a boxer, he presented himself before the astonished Slug, in the finest attitude, as an adept in that noble science, that ever was beheld; and calling to his master, who was raising himself up from the last fall which he had received through the wiles of Slug, he encouraged the knight to renew his engagement with Slim, with redoubled vigour; while the old butler, flourishing away with his fists, and jumping about, and varying his positions according to the rules of the art, at last came to a fair set-

to

to with the, by no means, disheartened Slug, who defended himself with much resolution, since he now found that he could not avail himself of his shifts any longer, and that he had a devil of an antagonist to deal with.

But notwithstanding the very vigorous efforts this brace of polemic and political philosophers, Slim and Slug, made against the prowess of the knight and his butler, in the so much more respectable and fashionable science of boxing, they were in a very few rounds totally overthrown, and obliged to yield, and to cry out most vehemently for mercy.

The rest of the servants who had been scattered at a distance from the combatants, by this time hearing of the fray, suddenly entered the room, and, finding what had been the matter, and being very much exasperated at the daring insolence of the philosophers, the men were going to lay violent hands on them,

and would have broken their bones, had it not been for the chamber-maids, who, instantly fetching the sheets that Slim had soiled, proposed the rolling him up in them, and fixing him at one corner of the room, as a mummy incrufted in his own filth.

This thought of the wenches turning the mens rage into merriment, they enjoyed it fo extravagantly that they delayed beginning the operation, while they burft into a long and insulting roar of laughter at the miserable and ridiculous fituation to which they fhould reduce the philofopher.

During this tumult which engaged the fole attention of every body prefent, the fly Slug, taking the advantage of his being overlooked amidft the fport the fervants were preparing to make with Slim, ftole away from among them, and left his friend to his fate, with no other concern in his mind, but the one of efcaping from
a like

a like castigation himself; which he did, by a precipitate flight to a distant part of the kingdom.

As the common people, when they set upon any noxious animal, in order to teaze it for their diversion, preserve no bounds to their violence, but the spirit of oppression catches fire at every step of their progress until they become quite savage and remorseless, the unfortunate and devoted Slim would have been certainly destroyed; the increasing fury of the servants rising to such a pitch, that, on their being tired with their present mirth at the absurd figure they thought he would cut as a mummy, they were determined, through the advice of the wenches, to take him afterwards to an adjacent pond, and to give him a good ducking there, to clean him thoroughly from his own filth, and to inflict, as they judged, a proper punishment upon him, for his having been such a notorious brawler and a scold.

If these resolutions had taken place, which were encouraged by Sir Geoffry, and not opposed by the butler, whose passion and resentment had not, as yet, had time to cool, and to enable him to look calmly upon the cruelty of the affair, there is no doubt but that they would not have stopped with the simple ducking of the philosopher, but have proceeded to fresh and more mischievous barbarisms with him, as their folly and rage got the better of every principle of humanity, and reduced them to the blind impetuosity of an unrelenting, unfeeling, heedless, cruel, ignorant, and degenerate mob.

Just at the time the servants were going to seize the philosopher, to put their scheme in execution, Charles, luckily for Slim, as well as the family, returned from a walk he had been taking, and rescued the distressed Slim, from his perilous situation.

He

He waited not a moment for any reasons the servants were endeavouring to give him for their conduct, on his entrance into the room, but, declaring that the philosopher was amenable only to the laws of his country, and not to them, for what he might have done, he drove them all out of the room, and administered every comfort in his power to alleviate the sorrows and sufferings of poor Slim, after the dreadful apprehensions under which he had laboured.

Charles flew at Sir Geoffry, who attempted to prevent his interference in the matter, and by one stroke of the magnanimity and resolution of his behaviour, he appalled the knight, and sent him away quite terrified and dismayed.

Finding that it was only an impassioned rencounter that had happened between his brother and the philosophers, upon the score of their preposterous proceedings, respecting their foolish notions

of innovation, and such like stuff, and which was of no consequence to any creatures upon earth except themselves, he ordered the servants to get Sir Geoffry's chaise out immediately, and obliged them to comply with his commands, and to execute them with all possible dispatch.

He recovered the bewildered Slim from his embarrassment of mind, so far as to convince him of the necessity of his instant retreat from his present situation, lest by his remaining in it, a minute longer, the returning tide of the servants' wrath against him, might raise the country people in such crowds about the premises, as to put an end to his own personal authority over them, and to terminate in the utter destruction of the philosopher.

He stepped into the chaise with Selim, on its being brought to the door, and directed the postilion privately, to drive them as fast as possible to Coventry.

On

On his arrival at that famous city, to which all refractory people are sent, he put the distracted Slim into the balloon coach, and dispatched him in a whirlwind to London.

Thus having secured the philosopher from his present dangers, and consigned him to whatever future scrapes his follies might bring upon him, Charles returned in triumph to his brother's house; and, by his prudent conduct, and the great ascendancy he had gained over Sir Geoffry, and especially the servants, he forced them in a manner, to be entirely satisfied with his proceedings, and to look upon themselves as a set of senseless creatures, when, upon mature and cool reflection, they took a review of their own actions, as they stood in so dim and obscure a light, in contrast to the brilliant exploits of Mr. Charles.

On the evening of that famous day, to
keep all the day's people to know, he
put the children into the kitchen
and the children into the kitchen
and the children into the kitchen.

continued

C H A P. XVIII.

REFLECTIONS UPON THE CASE OF SLIM.

THIS second hurry and confusion at Sir Geoffrey's, of course creating a great alarm in the country, and exciting the curiosity of the people to learn the true state of the case, Charles, to prevent a misrepresentation of this business, which, on the former bustle between himself and his brother, had occasioned so much disturbance, took an immediate opportunity to go round the villages, and to give such a satisfactory account of the whole affair, as to turn it all into a jest at the expence of the philosophers; and, without the smallest token of exultation on his own part, to draw upon himself, uncourted and undesignedly, the highest respect and admiration of his character, in consequence of his calm, prudent, but resolute and determined conduct amidst so many

G 5 difficulties

difficulties he had been plunged into, and among such a set of boisterous and troublesome fools as he had had to deal with.

On my getting from Charles, with other inquirers, a perfect knowledge of all the particulars of this last affair, which I have faithfully related in the preceding chapters, I could not help being thr own, at the conclusion of the account, into a series of reflections, which I will take leave to offer for the consideration of the reader.

I must own that I was hurt exceedingly at the disgraceful predicament the philosopher Slim had involved himself in, and, in particular, at the terrible catastrophe, which had like to have been the result of his conduct. So much so, indeed, was I chagrined at the miserable plight and rough treatment which he so narrowly escaped, that I had some thoughts of giving up the continuation of
the

the history of Sir Geoffry Restless, since I found I could not proceed in it, with a strict adherence to truth and matters of fact, without the painful task being imposed upon me, of relating the above striking features contained in it.

I grieved to the very heart of me, to think I must inevitably recount such degrading circumstances attendant upon the all accomplished Slim, who has, as a philosopher, distinguished himself much to his credit, in every situation of life, excepting only the mad and capricious turn, for some years past which he has taken to disturb the peace of his country, by an incessant and violent attempt to involve it in religious disputations and quarrels; disputations and quarrels that have been the source of more bloodshed and massacres, wars and desolations, than all the most horrid contentions that have ever happened in the world upon any other account. An attempt the more wicked and preposterous at this blessed

era, when superstition, with all her dreadful and abhorred engines of destruction, are utterly vanquished and overthrown; and the goddess of peace and harmony stands upon her ruins, in such a delightful position giving a free and independent toleration to the subjects of this realm to worship the Almighty in any mode they chuse, without the least interference or molestation from its government.

Added to his abominable attempts to revive the spirit of religious disputes and quarrels, in this country, which I have great hopes is utterly against the sense of a respectable part of the presbyterians, and only taken up by their more furious leaders, his self-sufficient propagation of his levelling principles respecting civil government, and reducing all things to a state of democratical anarchy at the risk of any commotions whatever, is a circumstance amidst his follies so truly ridiculous, that it has entirely reconciled me, after

after the most mature considerations of the case, to the narrative containing the particular and disgraceful scrapes he got himself into at Sir-Geoffry's.

When we turn over in our minds the absurdities which the greatest of philosophers and of men frequently fall into, after having distinguished themselves in a very eminent degree above their contemporaries, for great abilities, we cannot but lament the wretched fate of many of the first geniuses that ever existed, when borne down by the tide of their ungovernable pride and vain-glory, they become the jest and contempt of mankind.

It is truly pitiable that a man, like the present Selim Slim, who, from his having shone as a brilliant star in the philosophical hemisphere, could not be contented with the praises offered to his transcendent merit, without suffering those voluntary and well-earned praises of his admirers to stir up and inflame his ambition
so

so far above the reach of all the powers of the human intellect, however wonderful and extraordinary, as to set him upon the monstrous task of over-ruling the passions of men, and drawing, by the assumed irresistible force of his own strength, the whole world into an implicit obedience to his mandates, and to a perfect reconciliation to the wildest schemes that could possibly enter the head of the greatest dunce or madman upon earth, and fraught with events, should his schemes take place, big with the inevitable destruction of one half of the human race, and to answer, after all, no possible end, but to bring back the affairs of mankind into something like their present forms of restrained government, as the only means of ensuring to themselves, their mutual happiness, and to obviate the frightful evils attending upon an acquiescence with the vague, indeterminate and shocking plans of general and unceasing innovation.

CASUAL OBSERVATIONS UPON THE TIMES.

AS the reflections contained in the last chapter were written in June 1790, and immediately preceding the resolution of the national assembly of France, to abolish all titles of nobility whatever, and to reduce the government of their country to a democratic or popular state, I could not restrain the temptation this circumstance offered to my imagination, before I proceeded with the particular history I was writing, of making a few casual observations upon it, and the rage that operates like a wild-fire in the present times among those violent and restless spirits, who, actuated merely by their private ambition, and personal considerations, take advantage of a convulsion in a state, to involve it in total anarchy and confusion.

I will

I will not so far undertake the task, or assume the powers of a deep-sighted politician as to pretend to foretel the events of the present revolution of France, or the consequences that will ensue from the spirit that now reigns in the national assembly of that country to give way to the outrages of the people, and under the influence of the multitude, to raise themselves into Demagogues, or leaders of the rabble. But authorised by the following observations of Plutarch, in his life of Demetrius of Macedon, I will venture, at least, to unfold my surmises upon this occasion; and however dreadful my apprehensions may be for the fate of France, as a general lover of mankind, I will candidly and honestly own, that I shall be exceedingly rejoiced, to live to see myself entirely mistaken in them.

Plutarch speaking of the excessive flattery to Demetrius by Stratocles, and other orators or pseudo-leaders of the people of Athens, Demetrius having obtained

obtained their liberty, says " This was
 " the natural result of their new re-
 " gained liberty, and the true character
 " of the temper of a popular state, which
 " is only a liberty for all persons to be
 " slaves to the wild, arbitrary, and extra-
 " vagant humours of a giddy, rash, and
 " inconstant multitude of fools, managed
 " by a set of more cunning knaves."

From these thoughts of that great poli-
 tician and philosopher Plutarch, it is ma-
 nifest that he looked upon a democracy as
 the most horrid species of government
 conceivable; and in his accounts of the
 lives of the glorious heroes of Greece,
 who, after having performed the most
 amazing actions for their country, and
 yet in the end fell a prey to the blind
 fury of the multitude, inflamed and mis-
 led by the artful and cunning knaves,
 who envied their transcendent virtues,
 and triumphed in their ruin, he esta-
 blishes his above-cited reflections with
 such numerous examples taken from the
 ancient

ancient popular states, that have stood the test of ages, and have never been doubted, but have received the universal assent of mankind.

After such an opinion of a democracy as the above of Plutarch's, and proved by so many fatal examples of that kind of government, in his lives of the great men, who suffered the penalties of the worst of deaths or banishments for their virtues, and were only revered when they were lost, and their country ruined, or thrown into the most dreadful convulsions, which they would have prevented, what an absurdity then is it that rages in the overheated imaginations of men, at this time of day, which can urge them even to think of plunging a country into such an unsettled state as that of a popular government, from whence all the miseries of civil wars and discord must of course be the event; unless these prodigious wiseacres can, by some supernatural powers of their own, alter human nature,
which,

which, nevertheless, ever was and ever will be the same.

In popular states, though there have frequently arisen into power great, good and brave men, who had only their country at heart and whose exploits for that purpose, are now the theme of wonder to the admiring world, yet the invariable struggle for power of other contending enemies to their glory, and who have had nothing at heart, but their own private advantage, and the downfall of their more glorious competitors, has caused and fomented an unremitting sea of troubles, and such a rapid turn of fortunes from one extreme to another, that a people in this dreadful predicament, never felt the blessings of peace and harmony, but were always upon the rack of invention to supercede each other, and to raise themselves upon the ruin of their adversaries at the risk of the subversion of their liberty, or the destruction of their country; which ultimately followed, as an inevitable

ble consequence of the violence of their proceedings, and the virulence of their contentions.

Rome, it is well known, during the whole time that its armies, through the wisdom of the senate, were conquering the world, was violently agitated with domestic convulsions; the people continually struggling to wrest the power out of the hands of the nobles; which they effected at last; and with it the ruin of their liberty.

“ When the gracchi deprived the
“ senators of the power of judging, the
“ senate were no longer able to withstand
“ the people. To favour, therefore, the
“ liberty of the subject, they struck at
“ the liberty of the constitution; but the
“ former perished with the latter.

“ The judges were chosen from the
“ order of the senators till the time of the
“ gracchi. Tiberius Gracchus caused a
“ law

"law to pass that they should be taken
 "from the equestrian order.

"When the judiciary power at Rome
 "was transferred from the senate to the
 "equestrian order, who were the farmers
 "of the revenues, virtue, government,
 "laws, magistracy and magistrates were
 "no more, and soon after the republic
 "itself was lost."*

As it is manifest from the authority of history, that in the two extremes of absolute monarchy and a democracy, no mischiefs to mankind can prevail in the one, but what are as dreadful in the other, a mixed form of government, wherein such restraints are laid by the higher powers upon the licentious spirit of the populace, that they cannot trample upon, and confound all order, and every species of sound policy in a state, is the only true

* Montesquieu on the causes of the rise and fall of the Roman Empire.

and

and genuine mean of preventing the horrid effects of anarchy and confusion.

With regard to the so much praised revolution in France, by many, I am afraid, very shallow politicians among ourselves; and, in particular, the credit given to the sincerity of the aristocratic body of that country, for their seeming voluntarily stripping themselves of their dignities, and titles, and falling,—oh, sad reverse! from the towering pinnacles of their consequence, into the abyfs of plebeian indistinction; I have only to say that I am mainly of opinion this 12th day of July 1790, that they are influenced to this base giving up of their importance in the state by compulsion; in consequence of their flattery to a vile multitude, who have got the upper hand of them, and who would cut their throats, if they did not humour them in all their wanton claims, and blood-thirsty proceedings.

In

In a storm, like the present one in France, where the rude and boisterous torrent of the people rushes into the state, and throws down every thing before it, destroying all system of government, and murdering almost every branch of its former ministry; the remaining persons, who have accidentally escaped their blind fury, must betake themselves for shelter, to the tricks of hypocrisy to mollify their rage, and to any debasement of their principles to save their lives; but that they will not, so soon as the tempest is wearied out, and ceases of its own accord, reassume their powers, and strive to place themselves, as controllers of the people, in a higher and more tyrannical point of view, than the monarch that has been dethroned (or which is the same thing, reduced to a mere and melancholy cypher) is a solecism in the history of mankind, only left for the sublime politicians of the present day to fettle.

The

The inference I shall draw from these casual observations upon the times, is only a serious admonition to those restless spirits of our country, who, misled by the artful, specious, and insidious writings of a wicked set of innovators, would be so vain and foolish in their actions, as to insist themselves under their banners, and those of their abettors, should any unfortunate era happen in this kingdom, to afford them the opportunity of putting their abhorred schemes into execution.

With respect to my own private principles upon the government of a country, an absolute monarchy I abominate, but not so much as a democracy; for I think, of these two great evils, the latter is the worst and most to be dreaded. I look upon Bastiles and Inquisitions as the D—I. I am glad the one was demolished in France, and I would wish the other were razed to the ground, in Spain, so it might be brought about with temper, and the people of Spain could acquire genuine

genuine liberty, without running themselves into the same licentious, cruel, and savage brutality as the people of France have done.—But as the shocks and convulsions in a country, upon the peoples attempts to emancipate themselves from slavery, are always attended with the indiscriminate violences of the giddy populace, who never know what they would have, or what they are about; but slay and destroy every thing before them, according to the immediate and blind impulse of their passions, excited from no causes but their wild imaginations; and as these dreadful convulsions, massacres and desolations, continue so long before they can be appeased, and a country under such a curse can settle itself in any stable mode of government, so as to put a stop to such tremendous evils and misfortunes; how blessed then, must all true lovers of this realm feel themselves, in the present conjuncture, when they reflect that the troubles which

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have convulsed their country, for the purpose of obtaining its freedom, are past and gone; and that Old England now sits enthroned upon such a firm basis, of a reciprocal restraint upon the powers of the king, lords, and commons, as to ensure the liberty of the people to the end of time;—unless, through a wanton, speculative turn, in the measures of a parcel of sophists, knaves, and fools, they are drawn into the traps which are set for them; and which, if they do not avoid, by a resolute determination to support the present government against all innovators whatever, they will plunge themselves into inevitable ruin and destruction.*

* The above chapter being reflections upon a democracy, arising from the turn which the proceedings of the national assembly seemed about to take, at the time it was written, they may stand good as such, although the government of France, should, in the end, take any other form.

At

At this present 10th day of March 1791 (the time these remarks are sent to the press) it is a *tyranny* of a *number* of men, instead of *one*; with a preposterous clog upon it which they dare not *shake off*, nor *trust*. An imprisoned king;—a visionary monarch in the clouds;—and a national assembly whose *flattery* to him is *abuse*; and his compliances with their mockery of respect to his station, the effect of *force*; and the result of the most *mortifying* situation under the heavens.

What must be the end of this?—

With respect to the American states, they are composed of a set of emigrants from this kingdom.—They fondle over their plebeian indistinction, because there never was any nobility among them; and their admirers on this side the atlantic, vainly imagine, that a nation like France, whose sons have been bred up with the highest notions of rank and precedence, will as tamely fall into the same measures (which a terrible convulsion has forced upon them) as the states of America have done: whose levelling principle of government has not the least shadow of a precedent to oppose it; but flows naturally in upon them from their origin, or first existence in that country.

STRONG SYMPTOMS OF LOVE.

IN the course of Charles's acquaintance with Benevolus, previous to the death of his father, he had never entertained any other thoughts in favour of the beautiful Nannette, than those friendships between the youthful part of the sexes that distinguish family kindred connexions. He had been so used to think himself at home at Benevolus's, in consequence of the kind reception he always met with there, whenever he was driven for refuge from the base treatment he experienced at the old Knight's, whose house was no resting place for him, but under the greatest indignities; that he looked upon Nannette, with the eyes of complacency and

regard, which a kind brother would fix upon a sister, without any other emotions, but those generous concerns for her welfare, which would afford him infinite pleasure to see her happily married to another: but the very active part which this divine nymph had taken against Sir Geoffry's attempts to tyrannise over him, and the consequent success of his enterprizes, to establish his rights in the family, which had entirely originated in her spirited counsels for that purpose; had, by this time struck him with far different sensations. He felt himself under such obligations to her that his gratitude would have impelled him to have worshipped his deliverer, had she been as ugly as the devil, instead of her being one of the most beautiful creatures upon earth, only eighteen years of age, and he but two years older.

From the ardour of his mind, in consequence of the forcible light in which he beheld her generous support of him under his late distresses, he would frequently

quently, when they were alone, and in the height of his warm expressions of thanks to her for her transcendent goodness, hurry his imagination so far beyond the bounds of moderation as to cause him to snatch kisses from her lips; and to imbibe the delicious poison from their sweets, without any intention of gratifying a passion which was growing upon him, or the least apprehensions, for the present, of the thralls that were encompassing a heart, wounded by the mischievous arrows of the god of love.

Thus the easy and placid Charles, through the spirit of Nannette's counsels, and the *fire* of her lips, became at once the hero and the lover; and a notable instance of the irresistible powers of the female sex, when rightly directed and judiciously managed, to inspire us, the lordlings of the creation, with courage, and magnanimity, and all the tender passions, that polish and adorn the human race.

Charles, however, soon perceived what was the matter with him, and endeavoured to stifle the burning fever that was lodged in his breast. He shuddered at the thought of fomenting a flame, which if encouraged must terminate in the loss of his own peace of mind, or, what seemed to him to be ten thousand times more distressing to his feelings, in the disturbance of the harmony of a family, under whose roof he had been received as one of it.

He knew himself, with respect to his circumstances, to be little better than a beggar; and he looked with horror upon the fond suggestions of his mind to disclose his passion for Nannette, as a base return to her for her favours. He saw the happy prospects of his charmer, in the lucky train of her father's affairs, to re-establish his former fortunes to such a degree as to enable him to provide her a rich lover, and to settle her in the world in all her preceding

ceding splendour, by the time she would become, in the increase of a few years, more ripe and fit to enter into an engagement, so serious as the one of marriage.

Under these insurmountable difficulties, that lay in his way to arrive at the summit of his wishes, the possession of Nannette, Charles had recourse to his philosophy, and the natural calmness of his disposition, to suppress his ardour and extinguish his flame; and succeeded so far as to prevent a declaration of the real cause of his grief, and to save his honour from being sullied or impeached, by an offer, which must be esteemed by Benevolus so pitiful, and so much beneath the rectitude and honesty of his principles, and the dignity and disinterestedness of his virtues.

In consequence of these struggles in the breast of Charles, he found himself under the painful necessity of avoiding

the presence of the bewitching object of his desires, as the only mean of ensuring to him the secrecy of his passion; for notwithstanding his endeavours for that purpose when he was with her, and especially when they were alone, he could not help manifesting such strong tokens of it, as to cause the quick penetrating eyes of Nannette, to pierce through the inmost recesses of his soul, and to fathom to the bottom the real springs and sources from whence all his troubles and anxieties were derived.

She summoned unto her aid all her powers to repel that pity for his case, she so strongly felt, from setting fire to her own passions, and reducing them both to a mutual, hopeless and tormenting flame. She knew her father's whole thoughts (notwithstanding he, himself, was perfectly satisfied with his present mediocrity of condition) were bent upon fixing her in as high a sphere of life as that from whence she had fallen; and
though

though he loved Charles, and possessed one of the best hearts in the world, he would think him the basest of villains to offer to interfere with his intentions, by a proposal of his own, to throw her into obscurity and contempt, by a marriage with such a discarded blighted slip as he was from the possessions of an ancient family.

All the above-mentioned efforts of Nannette, however, availed her in nothing but to fix her affections upon Charles. The seeds of a reciprocal passion had, imperceptibly, been long sown; and were only ripened and brought to maturity, by the sudden start of their violent emotions, upon the death of the old knight, and the vile behaviour of Sir Geoffry.

Like a placid stream unruffled by a breath of wind, their former acquaintance with each other, had passed on in an even flow of simplicity, and good offices, without the least tincture of that blaze of

animation which seized upon their powers, when the boisterous and ruffian blasts of the storm, as previously set forth, seized the swelling tide of their affections, and brought into view, the hidden treasures of their love, that had so long lain dormant, undisturbed, unnoticed, and unknown.

They became, of course, in consequence of the delicacy of their situation, reserved with each other when in company, which, notwithstanding their struggles to avoid it, frequently happened, through the importunity of Benevolus to continue his acquaintance with Charles on the same familiar friendly footing as before.

Their embarrassments upon these occasions surprized Benevolus, but did not lead him into a knowledge of the true state of their minds; he being a man of an open honest simplicity of character, without any mixture of that kind of sagacity

gacity which can pry into the secret recesses of the heart, and make a right estimation of causes from appearances.

He found something was the matter between them, and after ruminating upon their shy behaviour to each other, he concluded that Charles's melancholy proceeded from his being deprived of a more respectable participation in the fortunes of his deceased father, and that Nannette could never behold him without feeling such emotions of pity for his case, as to throw her into the same state of distress (when in company with each other) on his account, which he felt for himself.

Benevolus impelled by these mistaken ideas would often chide his daughter for her estranged conduct towards Charles, and tell her that he wondered she could not now endeavour to keep up his spirits, under the load of his grievances, when she had been the means, in so remarkable

markable a way, of exciting him to make the best of his situation; and had urged him to look upon his case as not so mortifying, as she seemed by this time to consider it. But he could get nothing out of her by his remonstrances, except tears and sighs, and a manifest dislike to the subject, and to every explanation which he desired.

As for Charles, the modesty and diffidence of his nature, so wrought upon his behaviour to Nannette, in consequence of her seeming aversion to his company, that he never saw her without fear and trembling; and he looked upon himself as the most audacious vagabond upon earth, for the liberties he had taken with her, and which now proved to be the source of all his pains.

The thoughts of his enamoured carresses of Nannette, having raised her indignation at his freedoms, to such a degree as to urge her to punish him by
her

her present slights and disapprobation of his conduct, perplexed him in the extreme. He, like Benevolus, could not dive into the true state of her motives; and while poor Nannette, burned with a sincere passion for him, which she was only endeavouring to stifle, by avoiding every opportunity of an eclairsissement, he fancied that her distant deportment proceeded from her disgust and hatred of him, for his having dared to make advances, by his embraces, somewhat beyond the limits prescribed by that decorum which should be observed between the sexes, who are not betrothed to each other for the purpose of a matrimonial connexion.

Into this perplexed condition was the peace of Benevolus's family thrown, by the intervention of a passion between Charles and Nannette, which deprived the parties of all their former happiness and tranquillity. While Benevolus considered the melancholy that had seized upon

upon his daughter and Charles, as the consequence of a mere friendship for each other, upon the latter's blighted hopes of enjoying an elevated situation in life, upon the decease of his father. Charles conceived Nannette's behaviour to him, as the result of her indignation at the liberties he had taken with her; so that the fine, intuitive, penetrating genius of the beautiful Nannette, was left to struggle with the real springs that set this work of embarrassment in motion; and to endeavour to rouse all her virtues to obviate the calamities which she apprehended would ensue from the unravelling of what was a mystery to every body but herself.—Time, therefore, the settler of all things, must clear up these knotty points, while I betake myself to the affairs of Sir Geoffry.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.